THE INFLUENCE OF TRANSPORTATION ON RESIDENTIAL CHOICE: A SURVEY OF TEXAS REALTORS® ON FACTORS AFFECTING HOUSING LOCATION CHOICE

A Dissertation

by

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ABSTRACT

Why do people choose to live where they do? Answers to this simple yet intricate question can provide insight into how important transportation issues are to the housing location choice among other factors and how transportation policies and priorities could be modified to improve the type, scale, and timeliness of transportation and other civil improvements—improving the efficiency of public money spent on transportation. This research will survey REALTORS® in Texas about their last transaction to identify what factors may have influenced their client's decision to choose a particular region, neighborhood, and house. The responses will show what factors were important to their client, how important each individual factor was, and how these factors rank compared to one another at each of the three focus levels: choosing the region, choosing the neighborhood, and choosing the specific home.

Results were tabulated for all of Texas; the Austin, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi metropolitan areas; and rural and smaller urban areas. The survey results revealed that decisions are overwhelmingly driven by attributes of the house itself, with price being the most important factor in most cases. Neighborhood quality—amenities, reputation, and aesthetic—generally ranked second. Although traffic and transportation concerns are important (especially to millennials, singles, and those with no kids), these factors rank near the middle. Respondents commented that while traffic concerns may have played an important initial role, other factors overtook them as the search progressed. Traffic does not appear to deter people from moving to a new city, but bad traffic and long travel times do appear to deter buyers from certain neighborhoods if other, more important factors are first accommodated. This finding suggests more-accessible neighborhoods by any transportation mode are more desirable to buyers.

These results for each urban area could be used by policy makers to better meet the needs of home buyers and attract them to locations with excess transportation capacity, thereby creating synergistic benefits to both transportation and other civil services.

"…That we may grow in wisdom,
understanding, knowledge, and discernment…"

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INTRODUCTION

How often have you wondered why people choose to live where they do? It is a simple yet very intricate question. How much weight do people put on factors such as traffic congestion and travel times to important places compared to other factors including affordability, school quality, crime, neighborhood amenities, or the house itself? Understanding how factors like these affect people's home-buying experience provides a wealth of knowledge for providing better and more efficient services to the public. Cities and the state could be more responsive and proactive in providing helpful transportation options, neighborhood amenities, and services to the public. Tax dollars could be spent more efficiently. Builders and developers could better meet the needs of their customers. But how are transportation projects built now, and how is transportation policy directing what ultimately gets built?

Transportation Modeling and Location Decisions

In the 1960s, Texas first began transportation modeling using household surveys to collect travel data. From these surveys, transportation planners used population, number of households, household size, and acres of land in their modeling equation for trip generation and subsequently to estimate housing location. During that time period, major decisions about urban growth, freeway construction (including the development of the Interstate Highway System), and transit were based on estimations from these models.

The use of acres of land may seem unusual, but planners used it as a proxy for employment type and land use; however, early versions of employment data were incomplete and unavailable at small geographies. Different land uses were associated with different size acreages, which were translated to use intensity and the number of attractions. These land use assignments were largely defined by local zoning and land use maps. It wasn't until the late 1980s that 'acres of land' was replaced by employment information.

Around this same time period, planners also began to include vehicle ownership (vehicles per household) instead of income. However, after modelers began using income as a proxy for vehicle ownership, they discovered that income was a better indicator and was added into the modeling inputs (*1*).

Beginning in the 1980s, traditional transportation planning practices used in Texas focused on a few factors to predict where people will move and therefore, where infrastructure would be needed. Today, these include:

- Household population.
- Number of households and their average size.
- Median income.
- Employment type.

The fundamental issue with these factors in examining the housing location decision is that they may not appropriately reflect why people make a housing location decision. These factors try to predict where people would go based on previous trends without taking into account other factors that have a greater influence on their decision. People make decisions about where to live, work, and travel using a myriad of lifestyle and economic variables—including travel times/congestion. They do not (at least consciously) take into account the factors used in traditional transportation modeling to impact their decision.

This makes transportation improvements from the modeling process fundamentally *reactionary* to the movement of people. Any model used to determine where transportation investment decisions should be located may not account for factors that a person would actually use to choose where to live. Even factors that logically include the demographic variables that seem reasonable to affect a location decision, like age, marital status, education level, or race are not included in the model. The model does include household size and median income, which do reasonably account for some of the location decision (*1*), but has yet to include other reasonable factors.

While this criticism does not fault the transportation modeling process, it does raise the question of how transportation policy decisions are made and if there may be a better process for transportation investment decisions that provide a larger return on investment. By understanding the housing location decision better, state, regional, and local policy makers and transportation officials may be able to improve transportation and mobility options while also improving other areas of civil life.

A Paradigm Shift in Transportation Policy

The discussion of transportation policy in Texas must first note the importance of the State Legislature. Where the U.S. Congress' primary interaction with transportation lies in authorizing funding and creating broad policy directives, the Texas State Legislature deals with many more policy issues relating to topics of congestion, technology, safety, freight, ports, funding, data, public engagement, and technology. In addition to transportation policy, this body also creates and directs policy on several other factors, including education, taxes, crime, and broad aspects of everyday life. It also serves as the primary guardian over the taxpayer's money, tasked with ensuring it is spent wisely and efficiently in order to provide the highest quality services as directed by the state constitution.

As one might suspect, the policy discussion for each of these areas (transportation, education, public safety, etc.) exists in silos and is generally not coordinated between each other. Many policy decisions are made independently from each other with little communication or coordination about one decision with those who make transportation decisions. This is likely due to how funding for each policy goal is set up within the state, especially between education and transportation. Each area's funding is separate, and generally uninterested in the workings of other areas. In state transportation policy, the fundamental assumption is that all transportation problems can be fixed with a transportation solution. However, that may not be the case: you cannot always build your way out of congestion. The marginal benefit from each additional dollar spent on a transportation problem may see a certain level of diminishing returns relative to previous

projects. For example, after a large highway capacity project is built, congestion returns due to induced demand or new development spurred by the improvement. Any additional project would not necessarily provide the same benefit for cost.

The housing location decision, though, spans across several of these silos. In theory, if people are moving to a new suburb for the high quality schools, the relatively new infrastructure (other than transportation), and development type in that area, state and local policy could be coordinated such that, without coercion, people could be naturally attracted to an area with underused capacity. This would either postpone or eliminate the need for costly transportation infrastructure to the new suburban area while creating greater possibilities for transit or less-expensive travel demand management strategies. It may also create additional opportunities for bicycling and walking.

More practically speaking, what if transportation, education, and other funding sources were not as separated, but instead worked together to upgrade civil services while creating synergistic benefits in other areas, specifically transportation? This idea would require a paradigm shift in how policy as usual is performed at the state level, but would also require greater coordination between the state and local or regional entities—a coordination that may not always exist.

By more closely understanding why people choose to live where they do, state transportation policy could, over time, adjust to be more proactive with attracting a diverse set of housing decisions. This would by no means eliminate the need for suburban development and would not directly encourage high-density development. Placing all bets on one horse or another has never been wise. However, this shift would promote a more fluid and efficient use of state taxpayer dollars. Again, for example, if the quality of schools is particularly important in the home location decision, a joint transportation and education policy might spend more money on struggling school districts in order to make it attractive to home buyers, thus delaying even more expensive highway capacity improvements and future maintenance on facilities connecting a greenfield suburban area.

This sort of paradigm shift could also be similarly used at the regional, local, and transportation modeling level. For them, including a broader list of factors that impact the housing location choice may encourage urban and rural areas to proactively influence what their communities look like. However, the key element of this is knowing what factors are important to the housing location decision and answering these questions:

- How do people make housing decisions?
- How important is transportation in these decisions?
- How do urban congestion problems affect development decisions in Texas?
- How much reliance can be placed on traditional capital or operational transportation improvements balanced with policy and planning decisions?

Answers and guidance to these questions will improve the type, scale, and timeliness of transportation improvements for specific corridors as needs and opportunities arise. A combination of congestion mitigation strategies will still be used in most cases, but the role of the various types of solutions will sit within a broader context. But first, one must understand what factors are important in the location decision.

LITERATURE REVIEW & CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The choice of where to live represents a major life decision everyone will face. Arguably, it is one of the most important individual or family decisions and one that is made several times during someone's life. Housing location choice is complex; an agglomeration of several controlled and uncontrolled factors and influences that come together at a specific point in time and not simply based on transportation factors.

Over the past several decades, researchers have performed several studies exploring how and why people choose to live where they do. These studies are strewn across several different professional fields, including real estate and housing, education, criminology, urban planning, transportation, and sociology. In trying to disassemble this complex decision, variables can generally be examined by treating them in one of two ways:

1. Housing Criteria
2. Influencers (Both internal and external)

Housing decision criteria are the active portion of the location decision and represent those factors that one looks for specifically in both a home and a location (e.g., number of bedrooms, quality of the local schools, distance from family and friends, or home price). This also includes the availability of financing and cash for a down payment.

Influencers represent factors that influence the decision-making process, either internally or externally. Influencers may not be an active part of the location decision, but they play an active role in the process. Most influencers are demographic, economic, or political in nature. Internal influencers include elements such as life stage, gender, income, etc. External influencers encompass housing stock availability, neighborhood violent crime, transportation options, or the local and state regulatory environment.

After examining relevant research, most of these housing criteria and influencers can be grouped into the following categories:

- Demographics/Socioeconomic Status.
- Neighborhood Characteristics.
- Housing Characteristics.
- Economic Conditions.
- Transportation.
- Regulatory Measures.

Many of these variables significantly correlate statistically with this complex decision, while others do not (and some are simply unrealistic to study).

Demographics/Socioeconomic Status

Life stage and personal income are likely the two most researched elements of housing choice. Life stage, or life cycle, refers to the defining periods that each person lives through, including birth, childhood, adolescence, maturity, marriage, children, children mature, retirement, and death. Clark and Dieleman (*2*) summarize the influence of life stage and its effect on housing choice and tenure (i.e., renting versus owning) by concluding that, in general, each life stage, except the first three stages as children, is associated with a household move that corresponds with the specific needs of the family at that time. This initially begins by seeking rental property as a separation from parents and continues on to home ownership and larger space requirements as time continues.

Much research supports this pattern until the retirement phase, at which point accepted research splits: retirees either downsize their dwelling or stay in the larger dwelling they had with children in order to support family reunions with grandchildren (*2*,*3*,*4*). Life stage and age are closely connected, yet still different, in that life stage more accurately describes the events occurring in one's life at any age and includes the influence of children.

Another more-recently studied factor is the effect of generational influences, specifically the views of baby boomers and millennials on housing locations and types. Popular

views of millennials suggest they have embraced urban lifestyles and abhor suburban living, but a recent assessment by Kotkin (*5*) points to several demographic studies that indicate the effect is not permanent. Millennials prefer the suburbs to urban living as they age (recall the life stage discussion) due to pragmatic concerns such as job location, crime, school quality, and traffic congestion.

Other variables that influence housing location decisions include the presence of two-worker households and race/ethnicity. Adding a second worker in a household influences the location decision a bargaining process over the distance from two jobs: should the house be located equidistant from both jobs, or will one be significantly closer than another (*6,7*)? Race and ethnicity influence housing location decisions based on residential segregation (i.e., certain races live predominantly amongst those like themselves)(*8*) and on their tenure choice (i.e., renting versus owning a home)(*9,10*).

Housing Characteristics

From a practical standpoint, housing characteristics may be the most overt items that come to mind when making a housing decision. These characteristics form the foundation of what prospective home buyers give real estate agents. The home represents an intimate and physical aspect of the housing location decision, and is not taken lightly. What one looks for in a house, in terms of amenities, size, shape, and neighborhood, therefore, play a major role in the decision. If the layout of the house does not feel right or one particular amenity is missing, the house or the entire location may be disqualified.

Research has found that certain housing characteristics and amenities play a significant role in the housing decision. These include elements such:

- Number of bedrooms and bathrooms.
- Square footage.
- Upgrades (e.g., granite counters).
- Extras (e.g., pool, garage, or fireplace).

- Housing type.
- Exterior design.
- Lot size.
- Cost of utilities.

Research by Coolen et al. (*11*), Opuku and Abdul-Muhmin (*12*), Bitter, Mulligan, and Dallerba (*13*), Bhatti and Church (*14*), Cupchik, Rittefield, and Levin (*15*), Greene and Ortuzar (*16*), Pasha and Butt (*17*), and Dale-Johnson and Phillips (*18*) identified these attributes to be among the most important for selecting the house itself.

However, which of the housing characteristics are most important seem to vary among research. In a study of the creative class (e.g., scientists, engineers, opinion makers, professors, artists, cultural figures, actors, novelists, and others) in Dublin, Ireland, Lawton et al. (*19*) observed that the square footage and cost of the home, as well as distance to work were the most important factors in location choice (see also Frenkel et al. [*20*]). Adair et al. (*21*) concluded that house size and physical condition have the greatest impact on a prospective buyer's decision to purchase a particular home.

According to a 2013 survey of recent home buyers, over half of respondents wanted at least three bedrooms and around 2,200 square feet of space (*22*). In the same survey, recent home buyers were asked to rate over 120 features on a scale of "essential/must have," "desirable," "indifferent," and "do not want." The results show that in terms of housing characteristics, the majority of home buyers want energy efficiency, organization and storage space, a laundry room, and a garage in their homes.

Another study (*23*) found the number of stories in a home played a factor in location decisions among higher-income families, and that households with smaller budgets preferred overall smaller homes. The National Association of Home Builders (NAHB) reported that over half of all home buyers in 2012 preferred a single-story home (*22*). According to the National Association of Realtors (NAR), heating and cooling costs were at least somewhat important to 85 percent of home buyers in 2013 (*24*). Though all

of these characteristics are important, one should remember that these will be different for each person.

Economic Conditions

Related to, but separate from, life stage is household income. Income and socioeconomic status are likely the two most influential factors affecting housing choice decisions. Though life stage may be the force that begins the process of a move, income and correspondingly, the availability of financing is the mechanism that allows that move to happen (*3*). Stated differently, while having children may motivate a family to expand to more space, income is the determining factor that allows them to do so. As an individual ages into the late 20's and early 30's, he or she is more than twice as likely to own rather than rent and will likely be able to increase the amount of housing or amenities (*2*,*25*). Likewise, income stability plays an important role in determining whether financing can be secured or whether a family is able to own instead of rent. However, stability does not correlate with the size of housing demanded (*26*).

The state of the local economy heavily influences the housing choice decision in several ways with the most obvious being personal income. If one cannot afford greater home payments, then one cannot buy a new one and must continue renting or residing in the current home. Research has tied this to economic growth: as an economy grows in a city, generally so does personal income (*27*). This increases the demand for newer and larger housing. The likelihood of choosing to own a home instead of rent also increases as income both increases and stabilizes. Higher rates of job turnover and income instability undermine one's confidence in their ability to pay for a mortgage, and therefore, make renting more appealing than owning. Income stability tends to increase a home buyer's purchasing power; researchers have found that a 20 percent increase in income variation reduces the probability of home ownership by 1.5 percent (*26*). Kendig (*25*) also found that not being able to afford a down payment reduces the probability of home ownership for a 35-year old from 92 percent to 37 percent.

Income holds a direct effect on the ability to meet mortgage qualification requirements and on borrowing limits, and thus where people are able to and do move. In general, mortgage qualification requirements—most notably, the percentage of one's income devoted to housing—have been found to not significantly impact home ownership. More favorable policies towards homeownership may greatly influence its effect (*28*). However, borrowing limits do impact the location choice as they impact what neighborhoods in which one can afford a home (*29*). Additionally, these constraints have even been found to hinder an increase in homeownership.

On a related note, job and economic growth impact property values and housing location. In Voith's study (*27*), decentralized job growth throughout a metropolitan region increased land values along the urban fringe, while centralized and concentrated job growth enhanced property values in existing communities. This directly impacts what people can afford and in turn, where they can live. It then appears that the job and home location decisions are intimately intertwined (*30*).

The cost of moving does not appear to be a constraining factor when choosing a home location with one big exception: distance of the move. The longer the distance, the more costly the move (*31*). This directly impacts foreign immigrants and people relocating to a different state (*32*). Researchers found the propensity of renters to move more often and further distances is likely due to owning fewer possessions (lower moving costs) and lower job stability (*33*).

Neighborhood Characteristics

People take many factors into consideration about an area when making housing choice decisions including the quality of schools, access to services and amenities (e.g., green space, employment, shopping, entertainment, and recreation), crime or perceived safety, noise, street atmosphere, and even neighborhood exclusivity. "Intangibles are very often just as, if not more, important than financial costs and benefits…nearness to shops, schools, public transport, sport facilities and the city, affinity to a pleasant surroundings

and nearness to friends and relatives" (*34*). Stated simply, you may start at a specific price point and set of house requirements, which gives you many places to live, but adding job location, schools, and amenities will cause the number of possible neighborhoods to decline.

School quality is likely one of the most important neighborhood characteristics in housing location decisions. Research from across the country on school quality and housing prices indicates a strong positive relationship between the two (*35,36,37*). Most research in school quality specifically tests standardized test scores, though some have included other measures such as expenditure per student and change in test score. School quality has been shown to play a significant role in housing prices, where an increases in average test scores by a single point impacts housing values between 1 and 25 percent—admittedly a large range (*38,39,40*).

However, Kane et al. (*39*), noted that school quality ratings did not have a significant impact on housing prices in the short term, but rather over the long term. Reputation of high performance may impact housing choice to a higher degree or at least balance out years of lower performance. Many researchers, real estate agents, and news reports have also commented on the importance of school quality over almost all other factors. One should remember that school quality is likely only important for those in a particular life stage—immediately before or while children are present.

Crime or the perception thereof foundationally shapes both housing prices and people's perception and choice for certain neighborhoods and streets. Several studies have explored how crime impacts neighborhood desirability and housing prices over time. All have shown that violent crimes, primarily aggravated assault and armed robbery but excluding murder, are the only factors that significantly affect housing prices (*41,42,43,44*). One study revealed that a one percent increase in violent crimes will reduce housing prices by 0.1 to 0.3 percent (*44*).

Researchers believe murder may not be that influential because it happens so infrequently and can occur at any location. Other research notes that the perception of danger and crime (e.g., graffiti, trash, dilapidation, etc.)(*45*) or the perceived presence of convicted criminals or sex offenders (*46*) erode neighborhood cohesion, drives residents away, decreases home prices, and paints the area as undesirable.

The issues of *street* environmental quality and several studies on the effects of traffic and other noise showed little to no significant effect on housing location decisions (*47,48*). Authors did note that though noise is a nuisance, it is not enough to be a factor in the housing decision. Environmental quality and pollution, however, have been found to be a significant determinant in housing location choice (*49,50*). Specifically, air quality has been seen to impact housing price in both the United States as well as cities in other nations.

Transportation

Very little research has examined how transportation, specifically traffic congestion and travel time, affects the housing choice decision directly. Most of the research that has occurred focuses on the concept of balancing jobs and housing within similar locations as a means of congestion reduction in major cities (*51,52,53*) or on how congestion may reduce the perception of home values (*46,54*).

Almost all of this research reveals that jobs-housing balancing on its own generally does little to impact traffic congestion except with self-containment. Self-containment occurs when large quantities of people work near where they live within a contained area. This differs from the broader jobs-housing balancing which allows for the possibility that people living near job opportunities may work elsewhere, often worsening congestion issues (*53*). This can be seen in suburban areas where, though employment exists, the residents of the suburb do not actually work at that suburban office location.

Other researchers have approached the issue from a different angle, noting that many trips in traditional transportation modeling originate from the assumption that the home-

work trip is the primary trip purpose made by the head of the household and does not includes non-work trips (*54*). The National Household Travel Survey notes that this is not the case: work trips make up less than 16 percent of total daily trips including trips that are 'chained' or combined with other trips along the way, like dropping kids off at daycare or picking up dry cleaning (*55*). Trips to/from work do, however, account for 22.6 percent of peak period trips and have the second longest trip duration of any other type (second to work-related trips). In this same study, researchers note that home choice is more important and made primarily before work choice, further highlighting the need for a reconceptualization of the impacts of transportation on housing choice.

With the little research on the topic, commuting and congestion have been noted as important factors in the housing decision process. The NAR reported that three-quarters of home buyers said commuting costs were an important factor in their location decision (*24*). Additionally, research into other areas, such as pollution and crime, has found a link between congestion and the perception of home values (*46,54*).

Concerns about traveling to work and travel time appear to be important to many residents in metropolitan areas, including those who live in transit oriented developments (*23*) and "knowledge-workers" in tech and financial service hub locations (*20*).

Several studies found that a housing location may be chosen to fit within the household travel needs (*56,57,58*). For example, one study in the King County, Seattle, region found that the number of vehicles per household is positively correlated with the distance they are willing to travel for work, and living near transit indicated households are more likely to reduce their distance from work (*59*). On the other hand, Tillema et al. (*60*) and Scheiner (*61*) found that households would rather have longer travel times or higher housing costs to avoid paying higher transportation costs [see also (*62*)].

In 1993, Wachs specifically studied the issue of transportation as a variable in the housing choice decision using data from over 1,500 of the 30,000 employees at Kaiser

Permanente in the Los Angeles area over a six-year period. In his study, Wachs identified a core issue: “Some observers and regional policy-makers believe that a primary cause of worsening traffic congestion in some expanding metropolitan areas is a growing imbalance in the location of jobs and housing. They argue that work trips are lengthening at least in part because new residential construction is concentrated in outlying suburbs far from the traditional urban core, while new employment centers are being created far from areas with new housing” (*52*). He further notes that there are few policies that work well in creating true jobs-housing balance. The results of his data analysis and several hundred interviews note that employees rank safety from crime, better neighborhoods, more living space, and better schools (respectively) higher than distance factors. He also notes that with travel time to work, satisfaction shifts from ‘satisfied’ to ‘dissatisfied’ at 46 minutes (*52*). Wachs concludes his afore-mentioned study that, while travel times and traffic congestion are important and relevant to housing choice, other factors appear to be more important and have a larger impact on the decision-making process (*52*).

Regulatory Measures

Regulatory measures by the state and, more commonly, by local governments exert external influence upon where one decides to live. With the exception of red-lining (charging more for services in a particular, often racially different, area) and exclusionary housing practices, most people do not actually realize that these elements play a role in their housing decision.

Regulatory measures affect one’s decision long before it is made: by steering specific types of developments in one direction or another or by keeping people in their current homes. Cervero (*51*) identified several of these measures while examining elements that may improve the jobs-housing balancing concept’s push towards self-containment. These include zoning (including exclusionary zoning) and tax incentives to developers, phasing growth through growth moratoria or growth boundaries, tax structures and tax-

base sharing both at the state and local level, transportation pricing, and private sector initiatives.

There are a few reasons which explain why there is little research in the relationship between housing location choice and transportation. First, there are few communities that have experimented with comparable and contrasting measures, especially in the housing choice context. Secondly, conceptualizing these regulatory measures into something measurable and then finding data for those measures requires efforts that are labor intensive and, in general, have not yet been done. As more elements of land use policy are measured, more research into this area may be performed.

Application to This Research

Research Gaps

Wachs et al. (*52*) noted a clear need for studying the relationship between traffic and the housing location decision. Much is still unknown about the importance of traffic and its relationship to the overall thought process. Additionally, a synthesis of the most recent literature concerning travel and the built environment notes that studies about trip lengths and their relationship to the built environment and socioeconomic factors have received relatively little, if any, attention (*63*). Researchers similarly note a gap in the reassessment of the nature of home-work trips and their corresponding decisions (*7*).

Most of the literature examines housing choice decisions from either an economic viewpoint (cost of choosing a specific location) or from the viewpoint of one or two variables, leaving this very complex decision hidden amongst a litany of isolated works. Additionally, most studies examine only one city, neighborhood, or company in isolation rather than looking at housing location within a full urbanized area or state.

Research Framework

Conceptually and logically, there are many variables that impact the housing location decision. Based on what both researchers and common sense have identified, FIGURE 1

illustrates those elements of the housing choice decision, both conscious housing criteria and influencers that seem to impact this decision.

Based upon the literature, there are numerous variables that impact the housing choice decision. Most of these studies only look at one or two variables at a time; in some ways, this is for good reason. Constraints in conceptualizing how to measure some elements (even conceptualizing how to measure housing choice) make the effort extremely difficult. If researchers do determine a clever way to measure one of the variables discussed earlier, finding data sources may prove to be a difficult task and make that variable unsuitable for a realistic study. Then there are those variables that do not appear to significantly impact the housing location decision; those will be ignored completely. Based on the literature, FIGURE 1 captures variables that impact the housing location choice, divided by the concepts of influencers, both internal and external, and housing criteria.

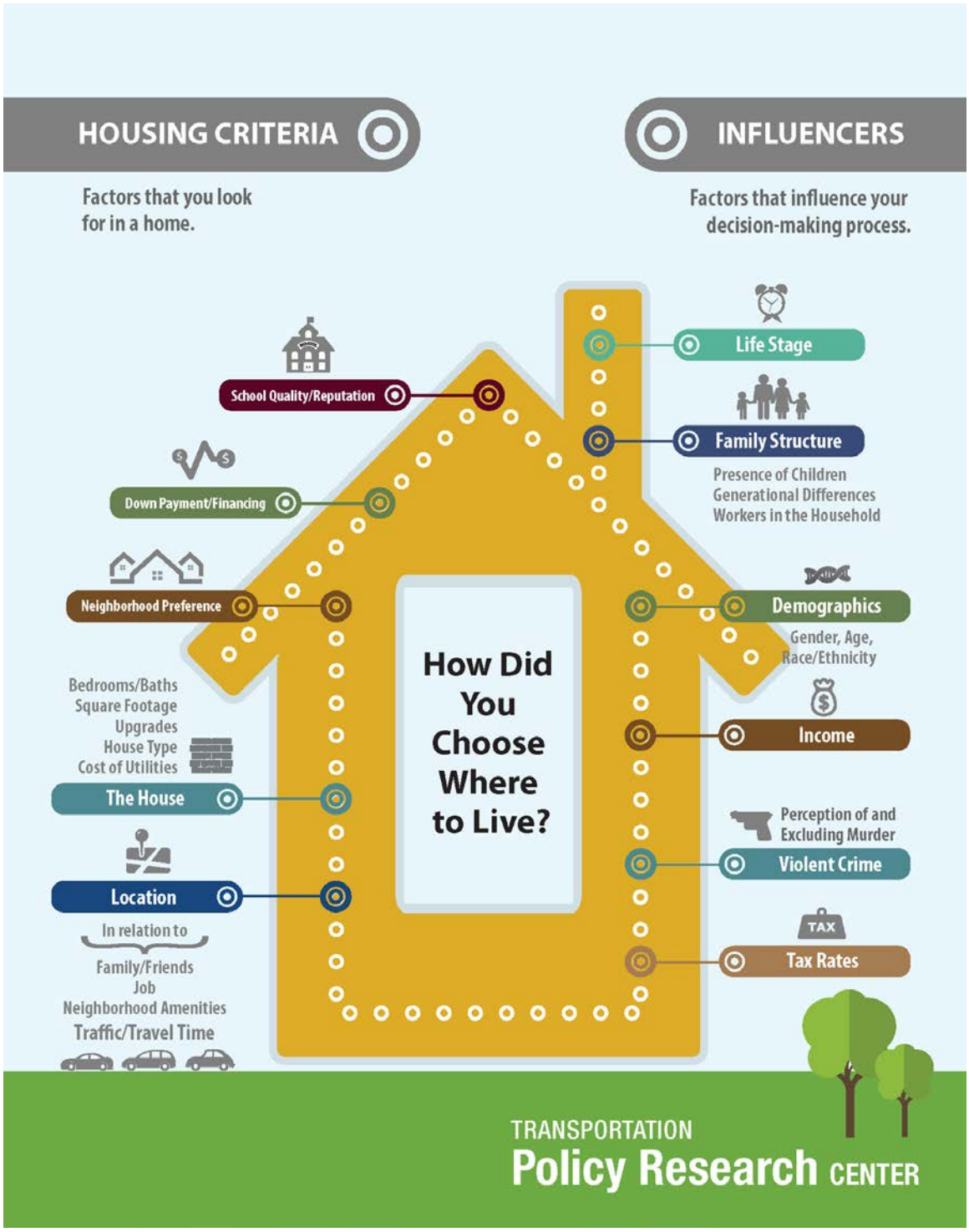

FIGURE 1 How Did You Choose Where to Live?

To bring further structure to the literature review on housing location choice and the summary of factors presented in FIGURE 1, a conceptual model was developed (FIGURE 2) of the factors that affect the housing location choice. In this model, internal influencers, such as life stage (leaving or attending college, job relocation or career changes, health changes, retirement, etc.), demographic elements, and family structure, to name a few, act as both a moderating variable and mediating variable.

As a moderating variable, these factors influence how housing and neighborhood criteria are filtered and interpreted by the buyer. For example, the life stage in which someone is living likely influences the type of house and other house-specific or neighborhood-specific criteria in their location search. Income and financing heavily impact the price of home they can afford, and the presence of children in the household (and number of children) may greatly influence how important school-related criteria are.

Concurrently, these factors may also directly influence the buyer's home location decision as a mediating variable. Factors such as race or ethnicity, the presence of children (and number), generation or age, and other similar factors may steer a buyer's internal decision-making process towards one location or another.

Housing and neighborhood criteria likely play the most significant and direct role in the housing location decision as these mediating variables are the most tangible and commonly understood to be a part of the location decision. However, these are also impacted and influenced by the buyer through another moderating lens of external influencers. These external influencers may or may not directly influence the buying decision, but they likely do impact the housing and neighborhood criteria buyers look at in the location decision. For example, local tax rates might directly influence a home-buying decision, but they may be more likely in influencing which neighborhood or home characteristics negotiable.

While this framework illustrates elements that have been found individually to influence the housing location decision, understanding how important, if at all, these factors play

in the decision-making process is left to be seen. This research will seek to determine that ranking of importance, specifically with how important (if at all) transportation concerns such as traffic and travel time are to the location decision among other factors.

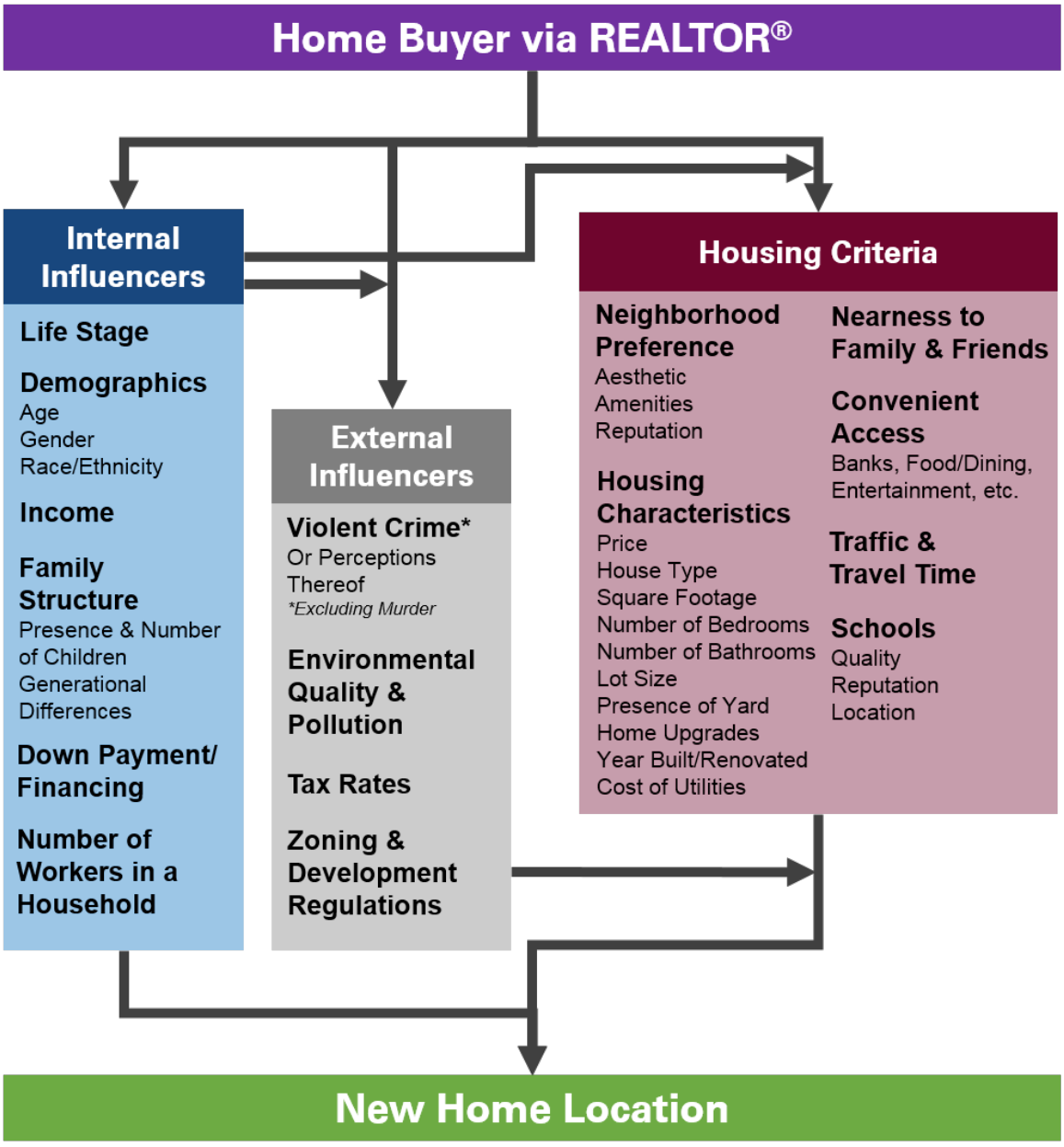

FIGURE 2 Conceptual Model for How Home Location Decisions Are Made by Home Buyers.

Will Likely Be Studied

Of the variables researched, several appeared to be both easily measurable and critical to the housing choice decision. These represent the variables that this research will actively pursue in order to determine how transportation impacts the housing location decision and how important it is among other factors. These include the following:

- Life Stage.
- Demographics (Age, gender, and race/ethnicity).
- Family structure (Number/presence of children and generational differences).
- Income.
- Number of workers in a household.
- Neighborhood preference.
- School quality.
- Nearness to family or friends.
- Violent crime.
- Housing characteristics (Number of bedrooms/bathrooms, square footage, and house type).
- Regional travel time and traffic congestion.
- Traffic congestion.
- Housing amenities (Upgrades, pool, garage, fireplace, lot size, and exterior design).
- Cost of utilities.

All of these have revealed significance in the housing choice decision and lend themselves to be easily studied in a survey format. Many of these factors are relatively direct and easily understood by multiple audiences.

Additionally, many of these factors have corresponding data sources for metropolitan areas that would allow future research to dive deeper into their relationship in the housing location choice decision. This would ensure that any findings from this research could be further researched in the future and easily related back to this study.

Will Likely Not Be Studied

Some of the variables did relate well to the housing choice decision, but operationalizing them will present significant challenges to researchers. Additionally, some variables may not add significant value to the overall model (even though data may exist). These variables should be noted, but will ultimately be excluded from future analysis unless a suitable data source is found. These include:

- Perceptions of crime/safety.
- Neighborhood amenities.
- Income Stability.
- Down payment/financing.
- Local zoning and development regulations.
- Local tax rates.
- Environmental quality/pollution.

Will Not Be Studied

Finally, there are some variables that have been shown in research to not impact the housing location decision at all, even though they may seem to impact the decision or anecdotally are mentioned as variables. These variables will be excluded from the research entirely.

- Traffic and ambient noise.
- Street environment and quality.
- Short-term school quality changes.
- Moving costs.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The first step in understanding the complex decision of why people choose to live where they do and where transportation concerns factor into that decision requires an assessment of what others have done to identify the relevant factors in people's home-buying decision. Based on the literature review and conceptual framework discussed earlier, a broad list of factors found to affect this decision were condensed into 14 different factors that influence the regional and neighborhood location decision and 10 that influence the housing-specific decision. These factors will be discussed in greater detail in the *Property Location Questions* section of this section.

The next (and likely most important) step in answering this question is capturing how past decisions have been made by Texans when purchasing a home. To do this, the research conducted a survey of recent home purchase transactions to assess what of these factors were important or not important to the location decision. This required a survey population to be defined, a survey to be developed, and information about the home-buying decision collected from the survey to be analyzed and assessed.

Survey Population

When conducting any survey, the ability to survey an entire population would be ideal. However, obtaining a response from every person is impractical, costly, and nearly impossible. This research is concerned specifically with housing location decisions in the state of Texas and by metropolitan region, and therefore only be examined residential buyer transactions occurring in Texas and five major metropolitan areas—Dallas-Fort Worth, Austin, Houston, San Antonio, and Corpus Christi—and a group including rural and other smaller urban areas. Therefore, this survey effort required a stratified representative sample of the state's residential real estate transactions by metropolitan area. While a random sample would be ideal, self-selection was used, requiring a larger sample than would ordinarily be required. Additional information about the buyer, such as age, marital and employment status, family structure, and other

attributes, were also collected for further summarization at more detailed levels. This meant oversampling the population in order to ensure enough responses from each group, but also meant that the questions and the survey's overall construction and deployment were designed to reach those groups (*64*,*65*).

While recent home buyers are the target population, obtaining a suitable sample of recent home buyers' contact information is difficult and out of scope for this research. Instead, this research will collaborate with the Texas Association of REALTORS® (TAR) to obtain an email list of licensed professional REALTORS® to be used as a suitable proxy for home buyers in the survey.

The Use of REALTORS® as a Proxy for Home Buyers

According to the National Association of REALTORS® (NAR), a REALTOR® provides nearly 200 services, actions, and processes in each real estate transaction. Most of these functions go unnoticed to the buyer and seller being represented, but when one or more of these functions is not performed correctly, they know (*66*).

All REALTORS® have taken an oath and work by a strict code of ethics to promote fair, ethical, and honest treatment of their clients and all parties in a real estate transaction. Their role is "to ensure that a seller and buyer are brought together in an agreement that provides each with a transaction that is fair and equitable" (*67*). On each side of the transaction, this means that the REALTOR® has a fiduciary responsibility to their client—*to look after their best interests*—and is contractually bound *to protect their client from poor decisions and bad transactions* (*68*).

This means that it is a REALTOR's® ethical duty to understand a buyer's needs better than the buyer understands them. Purchasing or selling a home is an emotional decision, which can often cloud the judgment of the buyer and/or seller. REALTORS® serve as an intermediary and expert to ensure that needs are being met, regulations are being followed, and each client gets the best price.

From a seller's perspective, a listing agent should be able to accurately price a home, based on current market conditions that will net the seller the highest price in a reasonable amount of time. They should understand the changing regulatory environment and provide guidance on forms and rules that may have changed since the sellers purchased their home (*69*).

Listing agents should also be able to successfully market a seller's home by understanding marketing techniques, the target audience that may likely purchase the home, and the time frame usually involved in the process. Listing agents should also provide insight into prepping the home for sale, providing staging and photography suggestions and services that will better market the home.

Buyer agents must be able to translate their client's wants and needs, prioritize them, and find solutions in the housing inventory that will meet those needs. This often involves keeping their clients grounded in realistic expectations and helping them determine what in a house they really need in order to call it home. Buyer agents should also connect their client to service providers that will help them make an informed purchase—inspectors, lenders, home warranty firms, homeowners insurance, contractors, and other service providers (*70*).

However, using REALTORS® as a proxy for home buyers may bias the results towards particular groups or outcomes. For example, certain populations may not be as willing or able to use a REALTOR® in their housing transaction. This would include lower-income buyers who may not use a REALTOR®, especially those that are more likely to rent, home owners selling on their own or buyers specifically seeking to purchase directly from the owner, and racial or other groups that may not trust REALTORS® as a cohort looking out for their best interest. Disregarding these buyers will definitely bias the results towards relatively higher-income buyers and leave out those who rent almost completely. This issue is difficult to mitigate as these segments of the population would likely still be left out of an analysis should a list of recent homebuyers be available.

Additionally, REALTORS® may bias the findings of the questions directly due to any shared education or industry jargon and thought that is common to the field. This shared perception of reality may cloud their recollection of what their buyers actually wanted and therefore skew the results one way or another.

With this understanding in mind of both the pros and cons of using licensed REALTORS® as a proxy for recent home buyers, there is still substantial reason to believe they provide a suitable test population to give insight about the home-buying decision. The most compelling reason is that the sampling frame is the only one available to researchers at this time.

So How Much Is Enough to Be Representative?

One of the most difficult aspects of conducting a good survey is obtaining a sample response that is large enough to be statistically representative of the population being researched. While survey response can be a daunting task, obtaining a statistically significant sample for real estate transactions by REALTORS® in Texas (there are over 90,000 REALTORS® in Texas, most of which do not regularly practice) may not be all that difficult. One would only need 379 responses to reach the 95% confidence level and have a confidence interval of ±5%—both generally accepted standards for survey sampling.

This sampling number comes from the following equation (*64,71*):

$$Ns = \frac{(Np)(p)(1-p)}{(Np-1)\left(\frac{B}{C}\right)^2 + (p)(1-p)}$$

Where:

- Ns = The complete samples needed for the desired level of precision.
- Np = The size of the population.
- p = the proportion of the population to choose a particular response (0.5 being the most conservative proportion).

- B = The acceptable margin of error (generally acceptable between ±5% and ±1%).
- C = The Z score associated with the desired confidence level (generally accepted at 95% or 99%).

As Np approaches 6,000, the minimum number of samples required does not substantially increase. One could sample the over 300 million residents of the United States and still only require 1,067 completed responses to provide a statistically significant response (*64*).

However, since stratification is desired, the number of completed samples increases, because one would now need a minimum required sample for the smallest strata desired. In this case, a minimum sample per metropolitan area per comparable demographic category should be equal to or greater than approximately 20 responses.

By achieving the minimum sample size or increasing the sample size beyond the required minimum, any Type II errors (i.e., identifying a false negative or incorrectly retaining a false null hypothesis) will be minimized and will show how sensitive the statistical test is. However, it will not reveal how good the data are and may increase the possibility of a Type I error (i.e., identifying a false positive or falsely rejecting a true null hypothesis) (*72*).

Survey Development & Design

The goal of any good survey design is to minimize the four main types of survey error: coverage error, sampling error, nonresponse error, and measurement error (*73*).

- **Coverage Error**: Not all members of a known population have a chance of being included in the survey sample. This can occur due to survey deployment mode or researcher bias (e.g., using an internet survey when not everyone has access to the internet or using a sample frame based on home telephone numbers only).

For this research, coverage error is reduced because licensed REALTORS® must all maintain frequent communication with the TAR via the email address listed on their account. However, this does not ensure that everyone will read the email once it is sent, and it does not account for owner-sold properties that do not use a REALTOR®. Using the TAR email list may actually overreach the target group in that the number of actively-practicing REALTORS® is likely much smaller than the list. While this cannot be directly mitigated, researchers will assume that inactive REALTORS® will be less likely to respond due to the nature of the questions asked by the survey about their last recent transaction.

- **Sampling Error**: Not everyone in a population that could be sampled is sampled—usually a result of non-random sampling or using a sample size that is too small. This exists to some degree in all samples, but can be moderated using proper sampling techniques and sampling the correct number of people to be statistically significant.

  Sampling error is the most likely type of error to impact this survey effort and research, due to the inability for the survey and sampling frame to provide a truly random sample (and the presence of self-selection in the sampling process). In this survey sampling error will be mitigated by ensuring a robust sample size (see previous section on sampling) in each metropolitan area, not reporting represented demographic groups that are under sampled.

- **Nonresponse Error**: Not everyone from a sampled population fills out the survey, which is a problem if specific groups of people who are different from others do not respond. For example, if in a given sample, all—or most—Asians do not respond to the survey.

  In this research, while this type of error may be specifically prevalent due to using REALTORS® as a proxy for actual home buyers, using this sampling frame may also mitigate this error to some extent. While some populations may

not use a REALTOR®, REALTORS® eliminate group biases by unifying the cohort that will be answering the survey.

- **Measurement Error**: The responses from people are inaccurate or imprecise. This is often the result of poorly written questions, survey design, answer options/scales, or other aspects of the survey design.

  To reduce this error, the survey's questions will be vetted and tested by both researchers, lay persons, and REALTORS® to ensure broad understanding and accurate responses. This type of error can be reduced to a certain degree, but never completely eliminated.

While many of these types of errors are difficult to measure and account for within the survey, researchers can compare the broad results of the survey with current demographic information in each metropolitan area, examining how closely the survey responses mirror conditions in the metropolitan area. To this end, each section contains a housing profile that attempts to ensure proper sampling has taken place. Taking steps to reduce each of these will ensure the survey produces accurate information that reflects the views of the desired population. These efforts will encourage people in the sample to not only respond, but to do so honestly and accurately.

With the information about the survey population and previous research in mind, a survey designed for licensed TAR members (referred to as *respondents* in this research) will ask about *their last transaction*. The heart of the survey asks respondents to rank 14 criteria that may have influenced their client to choose a particular *region* and *zip code*. Each respondent also ranks 10 criteria that may have influenced their client to choose the *specific house*. This information, paired with demographic and other relevant data, provides a description and ranking of what Texans in each major metropolitan region and statewide find most important when choosing a home location.

Survey and Question Design

When designing the survey, a deep understanding of the conceptual framework is necessary to understand what factors the survey will need to address, what questions will need to be asked, how they need to be asked, and what personal information may need to be collected in order to validate and organize responses upon analysis and completion of the research. Questions should be germane to the construct in order to keep the survey at a length that is tolerable by the respondent.

Care should be taken when designing the survey to balance two sometimes competing goals: making the survey as simple and easily understandable as possible and making the responses easy to clean, code, and analyze once completed. There may be times when these two coincide together, and following generally accepted and tested question and answer designs will achieve this, maximizing both respondent understanding and researcher analysis ease.

When designing the questions, use simple words and as few words as possible in complete sentences. Questions and corresponding response options should avoid vague terms, opting for more precise estimates or numbers when possible. However, questions should avoid requiring specificity that may compromise the respondent's ability to accurate answer the question. For example, when asking how often someone attended church in the last year, avoid vague terms like "rarely" and "sometimes" but also avoid requiring them to enter a specific number for each month in the last year (*64*).

When writing questions that use a scale, use an equal number of positive and negative scalar responses—this includes when using a Likert scale. When using a Likert scale, research has found that seven responses is the optimal number of responses, giving people an easily discernable scale that can be mentally parsed into meaningful segments without burdening them with too many options or too few options to express their opinion (*74,75*). Answers that require an undecided or not applicable response should be separated from neutral responses. Also, the specific wording of the Likert scale matters based upon what is being measured; choose the wording based upon these factors (*76*).

Questions could be close-ended, asking for a specific response unless the survey is specifically looking for qualitative data that supplements a close-ended response. When crafting either open- or close-ended questions, the survey must not introduce wording that may bias the respondent towards a specific view. This will greatly decrease the validity of the survey.

In unordered response questions or questions asking for a ranking, response options should be randomized in each survey to avoid respondents selecting only the top few (i.e., the primacy effect). These responses should be concrete, short, and grouped in small numbers to be easily ranked and avoid "check all that apply" responses as this option increases the primacy effect.

Response options should be mutually exclusive and questions should avoid being worded as a double negative (i.e., requiring a yes answer to really mean no). The survey should ensure that each question only asks one thought at a time and avoids asking respondents to make unnecessary calculations. Questions should be worded to improve recall and soften the impact of potentially objectionable or offensive content. This will improve the accuracy of the response and increase the likelihood that the question and survey as a whole is completed.

Survey questions should allow easy comparisons with previous efforts and word or group response options to allow comparisons with standardized datasets (e.g., Census age groupings, race/ethnicity wording, or income stratification). This will save a significant amount of effort in the coding, cleaning, and analysis processes after the responses have been received.

Survey length is an important consideration when developing questions. If the survey will be deployed online (as is the case here), the survey should be short, giving respondents information about percent completed or the amount of time it may take to complete the survey. The survey should also include an introductory page that explains the purpose of the survey, any boiler plate statements, and researcher contact

information. An informed consent statement may also be necessary depending upon the nature of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements. At the end, the survey should thank them for their participation, offer more detail about what was being researched, if necessary, and provide additional contact information or a place to sign up to receive the results of the survey when they become available.

The goal of the study is to identify the motivations and factors that influence a person's housing location decision in Texas using input from licensed REALTORS®. To achieve this, the survey instrument was collaboratively designed over several weeks using the aforementioned principles so that multiple viewpoints regarding content, wording, response options, and skip logic could be integrated. Outside reviewers with expertise in fields such as survey design and data management, housing issues, and transportation issues also provided input.

Because this survey effort will be interacting with human subjects, IRB approval is required in order to progress with the research. Before any effort began, IRB approval was obtained on an expedited basis. IRB documentation and approval can be found in APPENDIX A: IRB APPROVAL.

Survey Question Modules

Upon obtaining final approval from all vested parties, the survey was programmed using LimeSurvey to enable web administration. The final self-administered questionnaire contains 25 to 45 questions, partitioned into the following modules:

- **Background**: The instrument begins by asking the respondents (licensed Texas REALTORS®) for consent after a brief introduction to the research. Respondents are then instructed to focus on the most recent real estate transaction they had finalized where they represented the buyer. The background questions collected general details of the transaction, including the type of contract (purchase or lease/rent) and contract amount.

- **Client party size**: This section identified the number of individuals that signed the contract. While this differentiation made analyzing the results more difficult for researchers, the differentiation made answering the survey easier for respondents, reducing the potential for error in the collection of data.

- **Questions about single-client contracts**: This section collected information on clients that acted individually to make a purchase or lease agreement. This information included demographics, previous home location, and whether the client previously owned or rented.

- **Questions about dual-client contracts**: This section collected information on clients that acted in tandem to make a purchase or lease agreement. This information included demographics, previous home location, and whether the clients previously owned or rented.

- **Property location**: This section collected information not only on the property location, but also on how specific the client was in his or her selection criteria, the factors that influenced the client wanting to move to the new property location, and, finally, the characteristics of the new property that influenced the client wanting to make the purchase or lease agreement.

- **About the REALTOR®**: The final section collected information about the respondent, including geographic markets served, areas of specialization, and length of career as a REALTOR®.

A complete view of the survey and its questions can be seen in APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE.

Property Location Questions

The section of the survey asking about property location was developed by examining previous research into the housing location decision. Fourteen different factors that influence the location decision and 10 that influence the housing-specific decision were

used from the earlier-stated conceptual model. Those final factors that were chosen to be in the survey include the following.

For the questions concerning why buyers chose to move to a particular region and neighborhood:

- **Property**: anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
- **Neighborhood**: the aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
- **Convenience**: convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
- **Traffic**: any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
- **Schools**: the quality and proximity of the local school.
- **Crime**: the local crime rate or perception of safety.
- **Affordability**: the home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
- **Family/friends**: the closeness of the property to family and friends.
- **Hipness**: the cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
- **Job relocation**: factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
- **Rent to own**: transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
- **Relationship change**: change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
- **Health/disaster**: health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
- **Leave college**: leaving or attending college.

For the third question, concerning a specific property, options that were provided and then ranked included:

- **Price**: final price of the home.
- **House type**: types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
- **Bedrooms**: the number of bedrooms.
- **Bathrooms**: the number of bathrooms.
- **Size**: the square footage of the home.
- **Lot size**: the property lot size or acreage.
- **Yard**: the presence or absence of a yard.
- **Year built**: the year the property was built or renovated.
- **Utilities**: the average cost of utilities.
- **Must-haves**: the presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

These factors were integrated into three questions in the survey that asked respondents to rank the importance of each factor in their client's decision to move to the location they did:

1. "Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is assigned to a concern that was not at all important and 7 is assigned to a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concerns that may or may not have been voiced by your client in his or her decision to move to this **region**."

2. "Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is assigned to a concern that was not at all important and 7 is assigned to a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concerns that may or may not have been voiced by your client in his or her decision to move to this **zip code**."

3. "Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is a concern that was not at all important and 7 is a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concern regarding your client's decision to acquire **this specific property**."

The 14 (region and zip code) and 10 (specific house) different factors listed above were ordered randomly for each respondent to eliminate any potential bias for one factor over another. Respondents were asked to rank the importance of each using a seven-point Likert scale. This scale level used in the responses has been shown to be the appropriate scale for surveys where ranking importance is used (*74*).

Quality Checks on the Survey and the Data

Before any survey instrument is deployed, it should be thoroughly tested by a small sample group that approximately represents the sample that will ultimately be surveyed. During this stage, careful attention should be given to the overall survey design and aesthetic, length to complete, mechanics of the instrument, and each specific question to look for areas that may require adjustment before deployment. Careful inspection of each question should be performed in order to ensure that each question is both pertinent and collects the required information from the respondents.

Prior to beginning data collection, the English-only survey instrument was tested by a small group of REALTORS®, some of whom also work in transportation or urban planning research, to ensure that the survey was working properly, the questions were understandable, and the questions provided the information needed. Since many of the questions contained sub-questions, the survey instrument enabled the research team to collect approximately 125 data points. This enabled the questions in the survey to be tested by professionals that understand several aspects of this research. Responses from this test sample and their comments and concerns about each question were taken into account, with necessary adjustments being made.

The readability of the survey and each question can be easily tested using the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level test, which rates the average sentence length and syllables per word to determine the grade level appropriate for that question. While there is no definitive standard, researchers should desire to make the survey as easily readable as possible (*64*). For this survey, the questions scored between a first grade and tenth grade reading level, averaging at a seventh grade reading level—an acceptable range for this research.

After the survey has been tested by a small sample of the proposed sample population, the resulting data should be collected and analyzed in order to (*64*):

1. Ensure each question measures what is intended.
2. Resulting data is in a format that can be easily analyzed.
3. Questions and their responses do not overlap.
4. There are no unexpected data points or anomalies that may invalidate some responses.

Upon review of the sample data produced in the testing phase, no apparent anomalies were noticed. The survey worked as expected and provided usable data in the appropriate formats and types. Additionally, each question appears to be measuring something unique and appropriate for the research.

Once each question has been vetted and any necessary changes have been made, the survey instrument was ready for deployment over a given time period or until the required number of responses have been collected.

Survey Deployment

The survey was deployed from July 22, 2015, to September 28, 2015. The Texas Association of REALTORS® sent survey recruitment emails to 94,534 individuals that were members of that organization's list serve and are licensed in Texas. No monetary incentives were offered to survey participants. However, the TAR agreed to endorse the survey and assist with recruitment, in return for a copy of the final survey instrument. The TAR sent periodic reminders to their list serve to remind them to take the survey. The first reminder email was sent approximately one week after the deployment with a second reminder email sent two weeks before the survey period closed. This matches commonly accepted survey practice used to maximize response rates.

Approximately 28,500 of their members (or roughly 30 percent) opened the recruitment email and 2,198 unique clicks opened the link to look at the survey itself. This sampling

method did not use any type of random sampling. Rather, the survey relied on respondent self-selection. Therefore, while the results presented in this research can be interpreted as being representative of the survey sample, attempts to generalize these results to the greater population of REALTORS® in Texas should be done with caution.

Of the 2,198 unique clicks on the link, a total of 1,912 surveys were begun by respondents with 1,325 valid surveys completed. This completion rate represents about 1.5 percent of all REALTORS® registered as list serve members. This also represents about 5 percent of all REALTORS® that opened the recruitment email and 60 percent of those who clicked on the link. According to the TAR, a vast majority of those licensed in the state do not actively practice, and the most responsive and active members represent a small fraction of their total base (likely closely representing the 30 percent that opened the email). Additionally, the low response rate could be that email was not checked (assuming REALTORS® put a work email instead of one that is checked often), they were too busy to take the survey, or the emails were sent to their junk folder (due to a high number of emails sent by the TAR). However, there is no way to know for certain or compare the group of those who responded with those who did not respond. Statistically, this sample size exceeds the approximately 379 samples needed to ensure a confidence level of 95 percent and a margin of error of ±5 percent. When results were segmented, some geographic and demographic populations did not have a large enough sample size (approximately 20 responses) to test.

Data Processing

Cleaning and Coding

Upon completion of the survey, the raw data from the survey responses were downloaded, and efforts began to analyze data, specifically looking for errors, uncompleted responses, and other anomalies. Since this research is looking specifically at residential real estate purchases, the analysis looked for and excluded responses that were for non-residential purchases or purchases in which the client would not reside.

Questions that were qualitative in nature were also coded:

- A question asking for any other reasons that the client factored into his or her decision to acquire the property.
- In what metropolitan area or region in which the respondent works.
- What specific type of client or property type the respondent caters to most of the time.

To code this information, each individual response was examined and categorized according to broad groupings. In the first question, groupings corresponded to the factors found as significant predictors of housing location choice. In the third question, respondent specialties were grouped as client centered, property centered, geography centered, and other services offered. Grouping respondents by metropolitan area was much simpler—they were grouped using U.S. Census Bureau metropolitan statistical area (MSA) definitions. Once this was completed, the responses were again reviewed for any errors.

Aggregation

The research faced certain challenges between some responses and how to accurately yet succinctly test and report the survey results. In many cases, certain demographic information had to be aggregated, using certain assumptions, in order to make the data usable. Any time the option for "don't know/refuse" was used, those responses for that particular analysis were excluded, reducing the sample size of certain categories.

Metropolitan Area Aggregations

While the exact address of the homes purchased was not asked for or provided by the respondent, the survey did require a zip code for the home. From these zip codes, the aggregation used geographic information systems to group the responses by MSA. Those properties falling outside of an MSA or within an MSA not specifically assessed were grouped into the rural/other urban areas category and then analyzed as a group.

The survey also collected zip code information about where the client lived previously. If the client lived outside Texas, the information was grouped into one of the nine Census divisions or marked as international.

Singles versus Couples

The survey provides five options for marital status plus a refusal/don't know option. For the purposes of this survey, *single* refers to responses marked as the client being single, widowed, divorced, or separated. *Couples* refers to responses marked as married or in a domestic partnership.

Income Tiers

Respondents were asked to estimate the client's annual household income before taxes and other deductions. Since demographic information was collected about each client (only in multiple-party transactions), researchers chose to use the higher of the two incomes if the respondent reported the client as being a couple and examined them separately if a multiparty contract had two or more single individuals, using the assumption that respondents would likely only report the household income used for financing.

The survey asked for income by the respondent using income tiers commonly used by the U.S. Census Bureau, which includes seven groupings. However, literature on reporting household income and research by the Pew Research Center commonly report income in three tiers: low income, middle income, and high income (*77,78*). Because income tier depends greatly on the household size and geographic region in addition to income, researchers chose to match the survey's income tiers with those from the Pew Research Center (TABLE 1).

TABLE 1 Income Tier Matching

	Household Size				
	1	2	3	4	5+
Pew Research Income Strata					
Upper income	$72,521	$102,560	$125,609	$145,041	$162,161
Middle income	$24,173	$34,186	$41,869	$48,347	$54,053
Adjusted Survey Income Strata					
Upper income	$75,000	$100,000	$125,000	$150,000	$150,000
Middle income	$35,000	$35,000	$50,000	$50,000	$50,000

As seen from this table, income tiers closely match those from the survey, making the aggregation relatively simple. The threshold for being classified low income did not close match for single-person households. While this may be a concern, the higher number allowed the analysis to be more conservative in its classification of low income. Income could not, however, be classified based on regional income (that average incomes across household sizes may be higher or lower for different metropolitan areas). This is due to the level of aggregated data needed to create these income strata do not exist in publically available datasets. Special tabulations or confidential data from the U.S. Census Bureau would be required to obtain this information. Median income data by household size is available for each region, but unless this median falls outside of the tiers in TABLE 1, the information does not provide any use or additional insight.

Employment

The survey provided three options to classify employment: employed full time, employed part time, and not employed full or part time. The classification of what is considered full-time employment is complicated in households with more than one worker.

The aggregation assumed that if one person is employed full time, he or she will likely base financing of the house off that income. Therefore, if any multiparty contract had at least one full-time person, the entire transaction was considered full time. All other

potential responses were then classified as underemployed rather than unemployed since some in that category may still have a job.

Generational Groups

Respondents were asked to estimate their client's age. The survey provided six age tiers commonly used by the U.S. Census Bureau to report age. However, researchers chose to analyze these by generational categories, using the three generations most likely to be purchasing a house:

- Millennials: those aged 18 to 34 at the time of purchase.
- Generation X: those aged 35 to 54 at the time of purchase.
- Baby boomers: those aged 55 and higher at the time of purchase.

Statistical Testing

Upon completing the data cleaning, coding, and aggregation efforts, the research began testing and analyzing the results. Using the SPSS statistical software package, the analysis first processed valid responses in the data (separating incomplete data points mentioned earlier) and then calculated descriptive statistics for each metropolitan region and the state as a whole.

Choosing the appropriate statistical test depends greatly on the nature of the question and possible responses given. In most simple cases, either a 1- or 2-sample t-test is ideal for testing a simple hypothesis. If there are more than two possible responses, a 1-way ANOVA test may be more appropriate to determine if a statistical difference exists between responses. If a significant difference does exist, the ANOVA can be followed by different types of post-hoc tests to determine where the difference occurs by attempting to control the error rate (*79*).

More advanced forms of analysis may require the use of ordinary least squares analysis or some other form of regression analysis. This type of analysis is used if the researcher wants to predict an outcome based upon the collected data, controlling for other factors.

The results of the model will provide a predicted value or an equation by which to calculate a predicted value in addition to statistics of how well the model fits the data, thereby showing how much of the variance can be accounted for by the model.

In this research, it is important to note that *the research question is not seeking to predict any outcome based on independent or dependent variables*. At this stage, the research is only seeking to identify rank order, importance, and statistical differences between demographic groups. For this reason, *this research will not be using ordinary least squares analysis or other types of linear regression analysis* commonly used. This type of analysis is superfluous and unnecessary.

Regardless of the test chosen, the assumptions of the proposed test must first be validated to ensure its appropriateness and mitigate any potential error or validity concerns that may arise during the analysis stage. In addition to normality, one should also test for homogeneity/ heteroscedasticity, a linear relationship, outliers, and independence of cases (*80*).

After descriptive statistics were calculated, the mean importance for each of the 14 (region and zip code) and 10 (specific house) factors by demographic category by region (using the raw values from the seven-point Likert scale mentioned previously) were calculated. These means were then ranked in order from highest to lowest for each demographic category and region. The results of these calculations can be seen in Appendices C through I. Factors that had a mean less than 3.0 were shown as unimportant in the location decision. These factors were generally ignored in further analysis; however, the rank order of all factors (both important and unimportant) still offers value in analyzing how factors are prioritized.

Once the mean analysis was completed, the analysis performed several statistical tests to compare the means of one demographic category against another (e.g., comparing the means of the 14 or 10 factors for a single buyer versus coupled buyers or against generations). While sample sizes in most cases were large enough for analysis, in several

cases, the data were not normally distributed. Therefore, when comparing means for only two demographic groups, a Mann-Whitney U test was chosen, which is a non-parametric test appropriate for this case.

When comparing the means for income tiers and between generations, the analysis used an analysis of variance (ANOVA) test. While these tests generally require distributions to be normally distributed, they are still considered robust when the variability within the groups (df_{error}) is greater than or equal to 20. In this case, the relatively large sample sizes help meet this assumption.

A Levene's test for homogeneity was also performed to ensure the ANOVA's assumption of equal variances between groups is met. In nearly all cases, each factor passed this test; however, there were a few instances where this test failed. ANOVAs were still used in these cases when the sample size was larger than 20 and when the ratio of maximum group variance to minimum group variance was less than 10:1. In this case, ANOVAs are robust to heteroscedasticity.

To further assure robustness among the data, small spot comparisons were made between responses given at different time periods of the survey period. This showed that answers were not statistically significantly different from one another throughout the survey period.

The assumption of independent errors is not a critical concern because the experimental design of the survey allows respondents to repeatedly take the survey throughout the open period so long as they were assessing a different client (which is assumed to be very unlikely). Additionally, buyers are not anticipated to be part of any significant preexisting group that could skew the results.

The results of the ANOVAs, while helpful, only revealed whether one of the three groups differed from one another on a particular factor but, unlike the Mann-Whitney U test, could not identify which group(s) was different. To identify these differences (which are the crux of the analysis in this dissertation), this analysis used a post-hoc test

called the least significance difference (LSD). Significantly different pairs were first identified in the ANOVA as those with a p-value of less than or equal to 0.05. With those pairs that were significant, the analysis used the LSD post-hoc test to then determine the direction and individual differences (which mean was significantly higher or lower than others). These results can be seen in the color coding in the tables in Appendices C through I.

RESPONDENT PROFILE

The research analyzed specific demographic, geographic, and other information about the respondents, which was useful in understanding the sample population and making generalizations about the survey responses.

Contract Profile

More than 87 percent of the contracts reported in the survey were for a client or clients looking for a property to purchase. Another 12 percent of the contracts were for a client or clients looking to rent or lease a property. Of all contracts surveyed, 33 percent involved individuals, 57 percent involved two clients, and 10 percent involved three or more clients.[1]

Of all surveyed clients, more than 90 percent purchased, leased, or rented property with the intention of using the property as their full-time residence. According to open comments, the vast majority of the other uses were for vacation or student homes.[2]

Sales Price

The survey collected the following data about the sales price of homes:

- Sales prices ranged from $12,000 to $15,000,000.
- Respondents reported an average sales price of homes of approximately $325,500 and a median price of $225,000.
- 35 percent of the properties sold for between $100,000 and $199,999; 28 percent sold for between $200,000 and $299,999.
- 70 percent of reported purchases were under $299,999.
- 14 percent of contracts to purchase a home did not report a final sales price.

[1] Only buyer-side transactions were analyzed in the survey. No information was collected about seller-side transactions.
[2] Views about student home locations still retain validity since they will ultimately be where someone primarily lives.

FIGURE 3 shows a complete distribution of home prices from the survey compared to actual sales prices for Texas during 2015 (*81*).

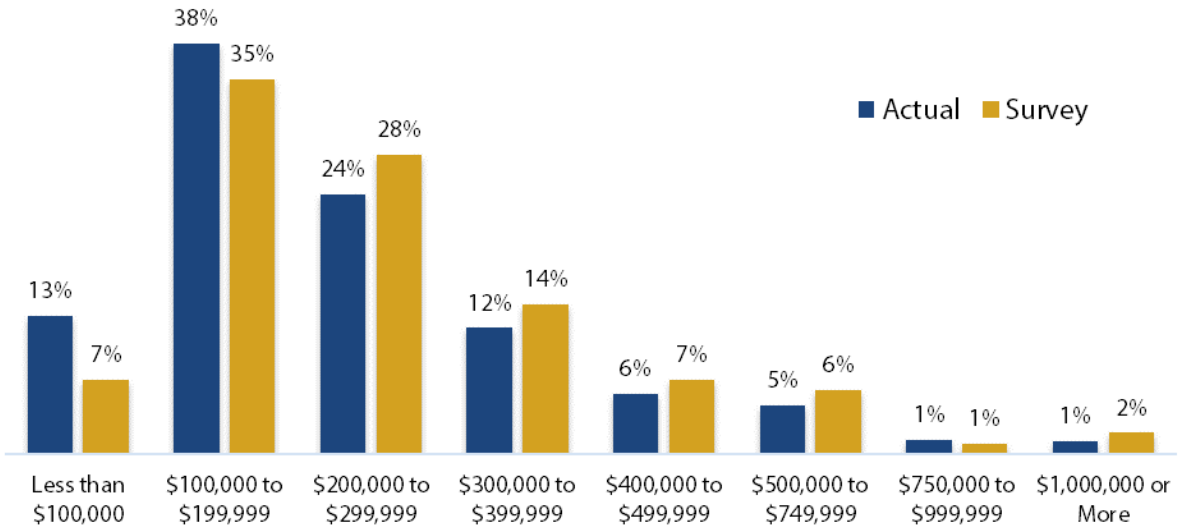

FIGURE 3 Survey Distribution of Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Rental Price

The survey collected the following data about the rental price of homes:

- Rental prices ranged from $600 to $7,500 per month.
- Respondents reported an average rent price of $1,700 and a median rent price of $1,500. According to U.S. Census estimates (*82*), the median rent for Texas is $870 and has a distribution similar to the survey's.[3]

[3] However, the portion of rents less than $1,000 is much higher, likely due to rentals that did not use a REALTOR®. This will pull the median lower than what the survey reports. Therefore, it is reasonable to assume similarity between the two.

- Only 11 percent of the contracts reported were for rentals or leases.[4] Of these contracts, the majority (40 percent) rented for between $1,000 and $1,499; 28 percent rented for between $1,500 and $1,999.

FIGURE 4 shows that the distribution of lease/rental price is remarkably similar to the distribution of home purchase value.

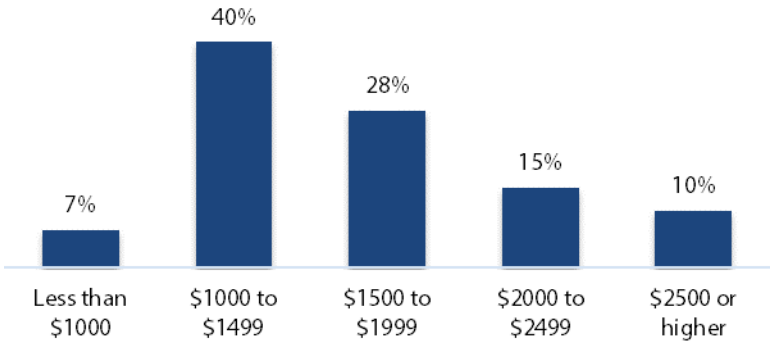

FIGURE 4 Survey Distribution of Rental Prices.

Client Profile

The 1,325 surveys represent 1,935 people acquiring property, either through purchasing or leasing/renting.

Gender and Race

Clients were split nearly evenly between men and women (51 percent to 48 percent, respectively, with 1 percent refusal). The majority of clients were Caucasian (70 percent), with Hispanics being the next largest group at 15 percent.[5]

[4] Researchers believe that the majority of renters may not use a REALTOR®, so the representation of rental property to the total population may be skewed. However, this does not devalue the location decision importance criteria discussed later in this research.
[5] Race and ethnicity are reported by the respondent, rather than being self-reported.

Age

Most clients were between 25 and 34 or 35 and 44 years old (29 percent and 24 percent, respectively, shown in FIGURE 5). However, a significant number reached beyond those age groups, showing a significant number of baby boomers purchasing homes. FIGURE 5 also compares the age of the survey buyers with householder information for Texas from the U.S. Census Bureau (*83*). The comparison of the two suggests a robust sampling that is representative of actual homeowners.

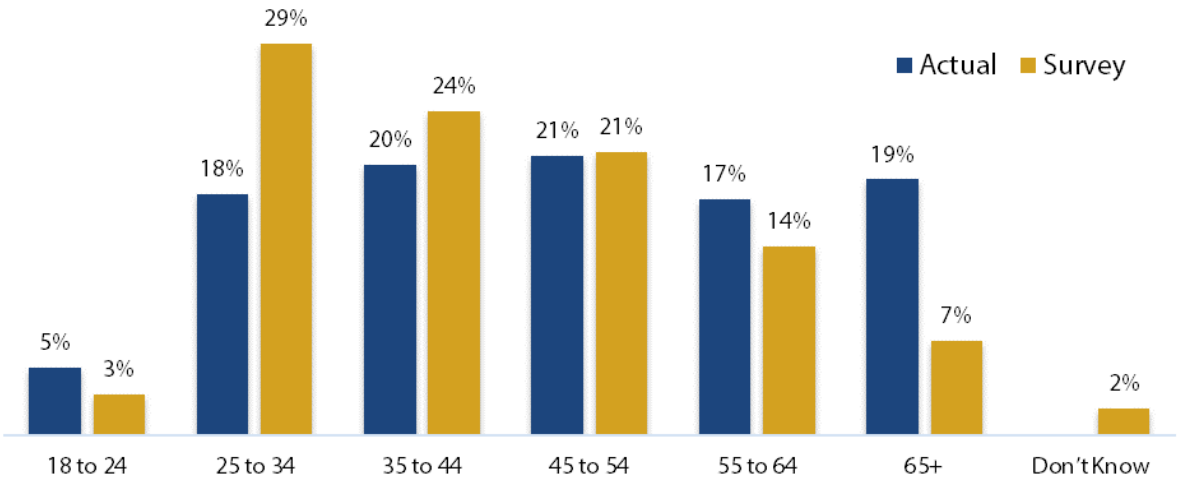

FIGURE 5 Age Distribution of the Buyer.

Household

Just over 70 percent of the clients in the survey are married or partnered in some way, with 28 percent single, divorced, widowed, or separated. About two-thirds (63 percent) of the clients had children.

Employment

Most clients (74 percent) were employed full time. Only 6 percent were employed part time, and 18 percent were not employed either full or part time (likely in retirement).

Household income varied the most of all other characteristics, both from the actual state and from each categorical bin. While the majority of respondents (29 percent) opted not to answer, the two largest combined annual household income categories were those over $150,000 and those between $50,000 and $75,000.[6]

FIGURE 6 provides a complete breakdown of combined annual household income with a comparison to actual incomes reported by the U.S. Census (*84*). The survey under sampled households with incomes less than $35,000 and oversampled households with incomes over $150,000. This is likely due to the low-income bracket being under sampled in the survey process or because low-income households are less likely to purchase a home.

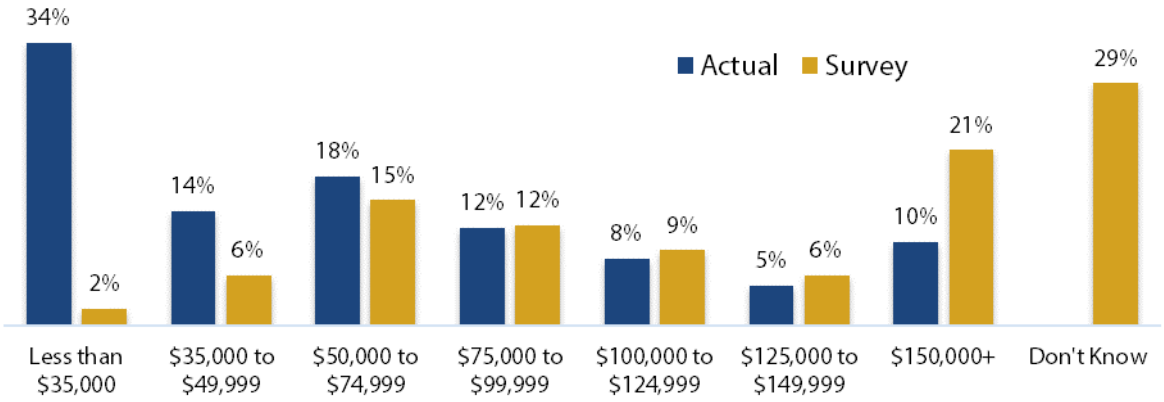

FIGURE 6 Combined Annual Household Income of the Buyer.

Previous Home Ownership

For those purchasing a home, most clients (58 percent) had previously owned a home, with 39 percent previously renting or leasing. The research did not inquire about the length of the client's previous tenure.

[6] This bimodality of the income distribution loosely reflects those that are single and those that are married or partnered.

WHO IS MOVING TO AND WITHIN TEXAS?

The survey reveals the details of over 1,750 moves both to and within Texas. The survey asked respondents to identify from where and to where their clients were moving in order to better understand larger trends in home location choice.

The vast majority of those surveyed moved within their own metropolitan area (68 percent), while 32 percent moved from outside the region (either from another city, state, or country). This information sheds light on four primary movements:

- International: a move from another country to Texas.
- Interstate: a move from another state to Texas.
- Interregional: a move from one metropolitan area in Texas to another metropolitan area in Texas.
- Intraregional: a move within the same metropolitan area.

Of the 32 percent that moved from outside the destination metropolitan area, most were interstate moves, representing 17 percent of all moves. The majority of these new Texans came from Pacific states (California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Hawaii). However, moves from the Mountain West and South Atlantic states followed closely behind.[7,8]

FIGURE 7 shows how moves to Texas are distributed across the nation.

[7] This does not represent movements from a single state. *Movements from a region could be made almost entirely by one specific state.* For example, while moves from the South Atlantic places third in interstate moves, most of those moves could come from Florida, which would then make Florida the number-one state losing residents to Texas.
[8] Geographical designations are based on U.S. Census Bureau regional divisions.

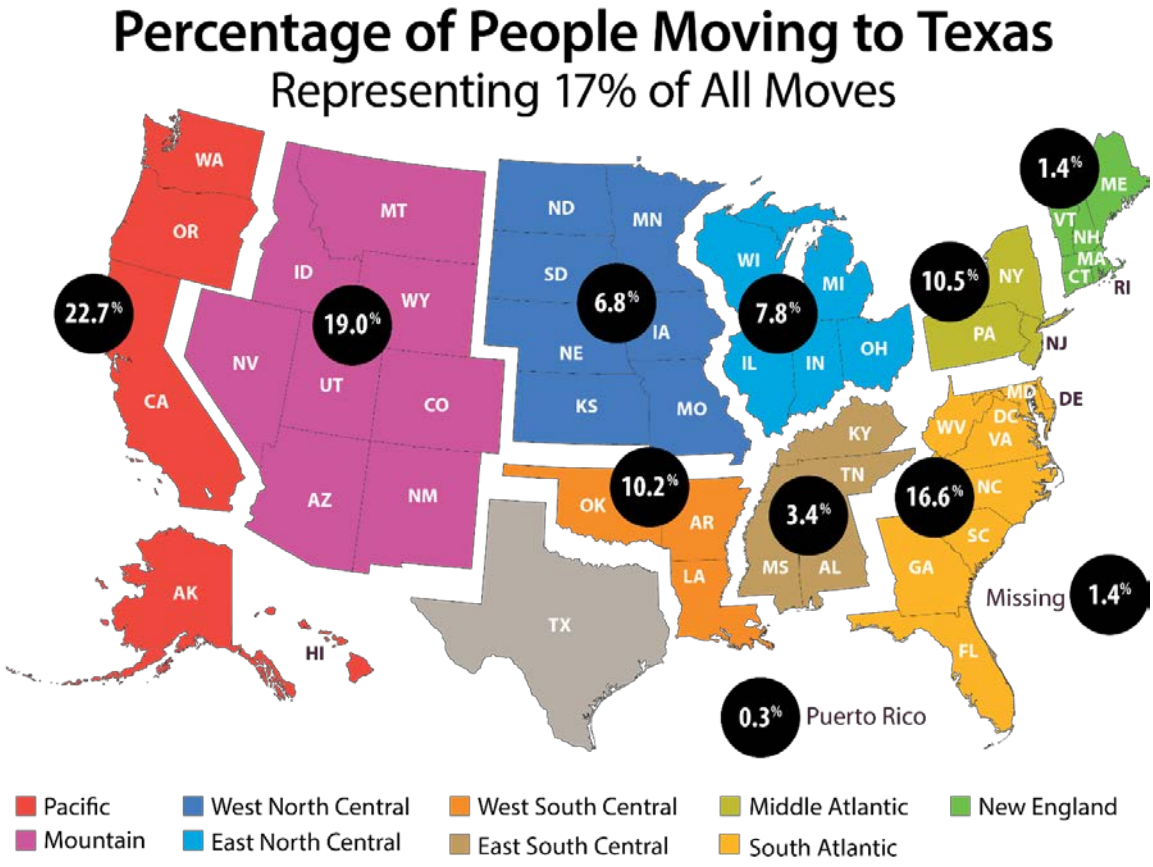

FIGURE 7 Where Are People Moving From?

The most popular interstate move was from the Pacific region to the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. Almost all new residents from another country (which only represented 2 percent of all moves) moved to the Houston metropolitan area. The state's two largest population centers—the Dallas-Fort Worth and Houston areas—are the two primary gateways for those new to Texas.

Within Texas, the most popular interregional move reported by survey respondents was the move from the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area to the San Antonio metropolitan area. Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth tied for the most intraregional moves (moves

within the same metropolitan area), each making up 19 percent of the total moves reported in the survey.[9]

[9] According to the Texas State Demographer, both the Houston metropolitan area and the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area each make up about 23.5 percent and 25.5 percent, respectively, of the entire state's population, so 19 percent of the intraregional moves for each metropolitan area would be expected.

RESULTS: WHY PEOPLE CHOOSE TO MOVE WHERE THEY DO

Determining why people choose to move where they do can be extremely difficult. And while the nuances of this complex decision may still be unclear, this survey offers a good look into broader trends and a clearer glimpse into the details than we have ever before received. Carefully asking the right questions based on previous research provides a foundation for establishing the broader trends and insights that allow researchers to answer this question.

Overarching Trends

The survey revealed broader trends about choice factors and demographic groups that provide important context for the discussion of why people choose to live where they do—at both the state and individual metropolitan area levels.

In this research, the word *significant* or variations thereof represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group. The terms *ranks*, *ranked*, or some variation thereof refer to the rank importance of a particular factor over others.

Decisions Are Driven by the Property

Overwhelmingly, attributes about the property itself rose to the top of the list of important factors when choosing a home. When looking at why people chose a specific metropolitan area, this may not make much sense; however, at the neighborhood level, people appear to be more willing to sacrifice or make trade-offs with any other factor so long as they get the property they want. Some metropolitan (and even rural) areas may be known for their housing stock, which may also influence this decision.

Price Is the Most Important Factor

In the majority of cases, the price of the home is (not surprisingly) the most important factor. However, another cost-of-living factor, the cost of utilities, while important,

usually ranks near the bottom of the importance list.[10] The one exception to this lies with low-income buyers, who are generally far more sensitive to the overall cost of living. The type of home purchased (single-family detached, townhouse, condominium, multifamily, etc.) generally comes in a close second to purchase price and occasionally wins out over price. This could signal a strong preference for specific types of development, including mixed-use units or more traditional suburban homes.

Neighborhood Importance Is Usually Second to Price

While the property itself usually won out as the most important factor, the neighborhood was always a close second (and in a few cases, bested the property for the top spot). Buyers expressed a high importance for quality, desiring amenities such as walking/bicycling paths, quality landscaping, or other aesthetics. This also included a desire to be in a reputable and appealing neighborhood. Convenient access to entertainment, services, food, and other activities combined with neighborhood aesthetics indicates a preference for communities that are well planned, carefully executed, and maintained. In Austin and Houston, the hipness of the neighborhood also plays an important factor (though low in importance, it is still significant) in selecting a location for nearly all groups. In these cities, encouraging trendy development and services or designs centered on nightlife may improve certain areas.

Traffic Is Initially Not a High Priority

Overwhelmingly, specific transportation concerns such as traffic congestion and commute times, while viewed as important factors, are almost always trumped by neighborhood quality, including a neighborhood's reputation, amenities (quality of overall design, trails, parks, etc.), and convenience (being close to extracurricular activities, services, food, and entertainment). However, respondents commented that while traffic concerns may have at first played a more important role in the home and neighborhood location decision, other factors overtook traffic further in the process.

[10] This could be because it is a much lower cost that may not be realized at the time of the purchase decision.

When new buyers are moving to a new urban area or from out of state, transportation concerns rank fairly low in importance. Moving to a city with a short commute time or low traffic congestion is not as important overall as being relocated there for a new job, the community's crime rate, or the region's affordability. However, traffic concerns are rated much more important in larger urban areas such as Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth than smaller urban or rural areas.

Traffic Becomes More Important at the Neighborhood Level

While transportation concerns lack importance at the regional level, respondents indicated that it is a much more important concern when buyers are selecting a neighborhood. At this level, traffic nearly always bests a neighborhood's affordability, school quality, nearness to family and friends, or the hipness of an area. *This indicates a strong connection between a neighborhood's connectivity with other areas of town and its attractiveness to new buyers.*

While traffic and transportation concerns differ greatly between metropolitan areas and among demographic groups, respondents representing those who are single, have no children, or are millennials indicated their clients rank traffic the highest among their comparison groups.

Respondents indicated that traffic concerns were part of a trade-off opportunity for buyers. Buyers opted to split the difference between commutes (either between two different jobs or between a job and their children's school). Many respondents also commented that buyers expressed a desire to live near transit or in a walkable/bikeable community.

Low-Income Buyers Differ

While the choices of middle- and high-income buyers generally match one another, low-income buyers differ in their views of importance quite a bit. While neighborhood quality factors rank highly for middle- and high-income buyers, these factors generally rank very low for low-income buyers. Instead, low-income buyers put a high importance

on nearness to family and friends, school quality, and an area's affordability. These buyers are likely looking for child care and employment support from family and social systems. Low-income buyers also rank an area's crime rate with lower importance than other groups. This does not indicate a preference for unsafe areas but rather likely points to a lack of options in their price range.

Families Rate Schools Highly

Not surprisingly, couples (including married couples and domestic partnerships) and those with children place a higher importance on school quality and location than other comparable groups (proximity to a school is categorized differently from transportation concerns due to attendance and districting concerns). Singles and those with no children still rank school quality as an important factor. This is likely due to a future desire to have children or the thought that a neighborhood with good schools will likely increase their future home resale value. Generation X values schools over other generations (baby boomers often do not rank this as an important factor at all) because they are more likely to have multiple school-aged children.

Life Changes Affect Decisions

While many of the factors for choosing a home location are centered on the built environment, many factors fall into the "life happens" category. These factors cannot necessarily be changed by policy or physical improvements but still play a crucial role in understanding why people choose to live where they do. Such factors include changing jobs or retiring, having a change in relationship status, transitioning from renting to owning a home (or owning to renting), graduating (or attending) college, dealing with health problems, being displaced by a disaster, or wanting to be close to family and friends. Generally, these factors did not register as being at the top of the importance list, although they were consistently seen in the demographic groups.

Most notably, career changes greatly affect buyers' choices to move to a region; the responses indicate this is particularly important to single, middle-income millennials with no children. However, this factor also influences moves within a city, often being

an important factor for neighborhood selection. Also, a change in relationship status and transitioning from renting to owning was frequently cited as important, though usually at the bottom of the importance list.

The desire to be near family and friends also consistently plays an important role at both the regional and neighborhood levels, often being more important than factors such as affordability, traffic concerns, and school quality. The draw of family and friends can be a powerful influence, especially for low-income singles and baby boomers—both of whom likely value the support more than other groups.

MOVING IN TEXAS

With over 27,000,000 people, Texas has continued to grow in both good times and bad, attracting people from all over the United States and the world. What are the most important factors that new and existing Texans use to choose where to live?

This section uses the last transaction from Texas REALTORS® to summarize the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. Specifically, this section illustrates the aggregate Texas behavior and attitudes. This will be referred to as the *base case* in later sections that examine specific metropolitan or rural areas.

More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX C: TEXAS DATA TABLES.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

There were a total of 1325 completed and valid responses with 347 moving from outside the state to Texas. Due to the nature of the data and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing Texas

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 8 with a comparison of all metropolitan areas and the state in FIGURE 9 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure). The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 2. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX C: TEXAS DATA TABLES.

TABLE 2 Moving to Texas Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	4.79	5.67	6983.0	0.000	5.21	5.64	10252.5	0.006
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	4.83	5.48	8307.0	0.025				
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	4.61	5.22	8230.0	0.023				
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4.28	4.91	8170.0	0.019				
School quality					3.05	3.99	9838.5	0.001
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	2.93	2.06	7721.0	0.001	2.64	2.05	10637.0	0.009
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2.63	1.91	7944.5	0.002				
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.55	5.04	6536.0	0.033				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	5.48	4.53	5788.0	0.001	5.14	6.10	6677.0	0.004
Crime or perceived safety	4.95	4.22	6322.5	0.016				
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.53	3.38	5510.0	0.000				
Proximity to family and friends	3.64	4.44	6191.5	0.012	3.96	2.97	6313.5	0.001
School quality	3.82	2.31	5176.5	0.000				
Health reasons or natural disaster	1.79	2.40	6748.0	0.033				

TEXAS: Why Move to the Region?

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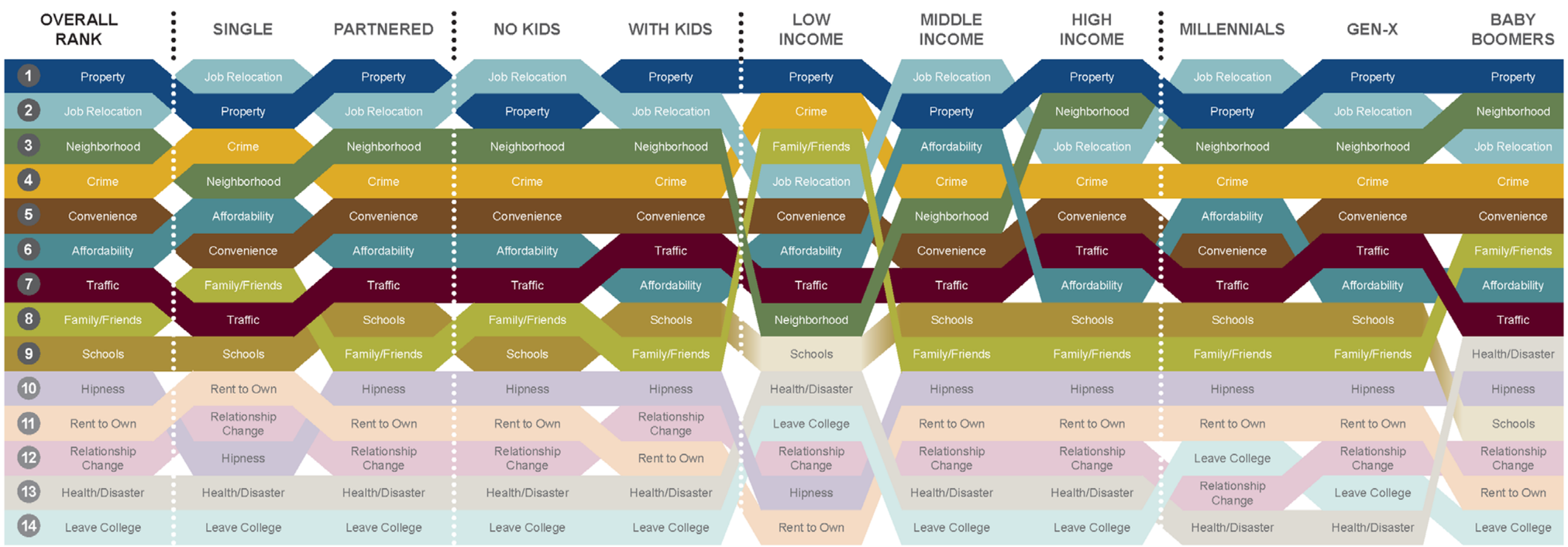

How to Read This Chart

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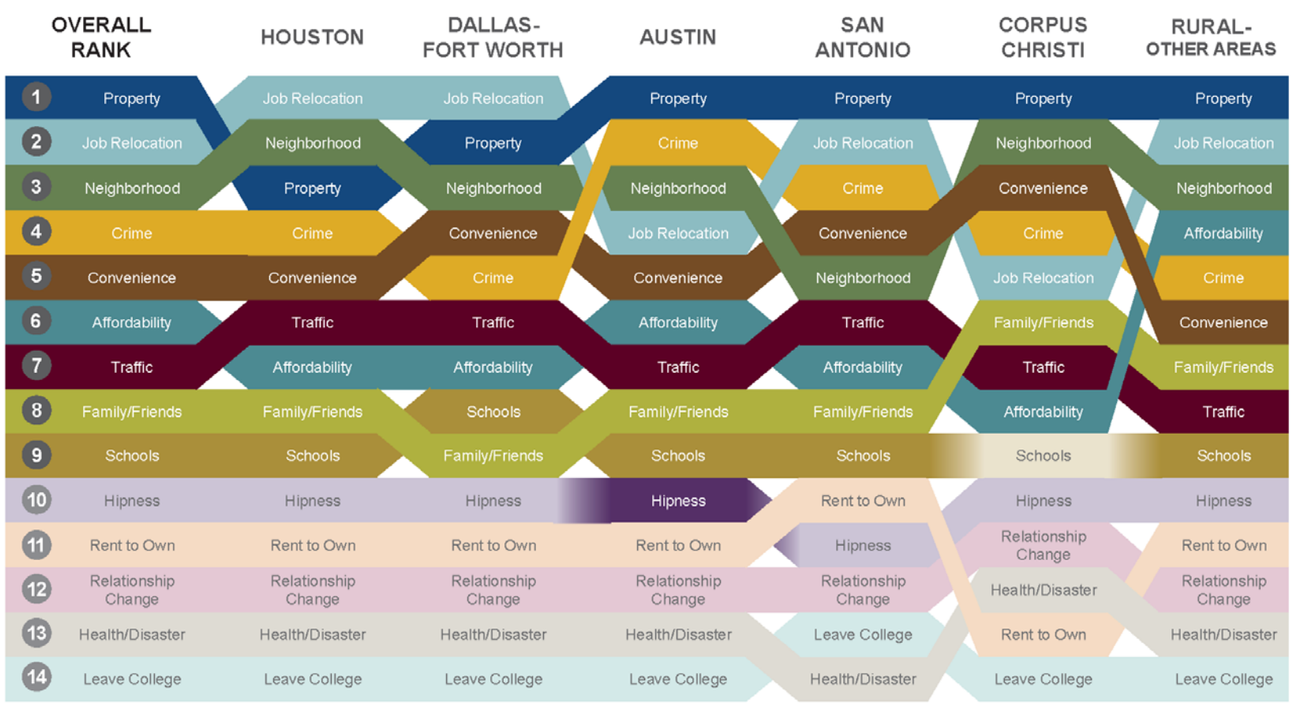
Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 8 Texas: Why Move to the Region?

REGIONAL COMPARISON: Why Move to the Region?



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Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 9 Regional Comparison: Why Move to the Region?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 3 and TABLE 4. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. Note that in some metropolitan areas, there may not have been enough responses for the income group to create a significant sample size for the low income category. Additionally, in some cases there were no significant differences within either the income group or generational group.

TABLE 3 Moving to Texas ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	3, 343	3.97	0.008
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 343	9.17	0.000
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3, 343	3.27	0.021
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	3, 343	6.61	0.000
Generational Differences			
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2, 341	5.11	0.007
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 340	7.14	0.001
Proximity to family and friends	2, 338	6.45	0.002
School quality	2, 341	32.03	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 341	3.89	0.021
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 340	9.55	0.000
Attend or leave college	2, 341	4.17	0.016

TABLE 4 Moving to Texas LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	Low Income	4.50	High Income	5.76	0.044
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	Low Income	3.13	Middle Income	5.02	0.005
			High Income	5.68	0.000
	Middle Income	5.02	High Income	5.68	0.008
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	Low Income	3.63	High Income	5.00	0.046
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Middle Income	5.07	Low Income	3.62	0.046
			High Income	4.00	0.000

TABLE 4 Continued

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	Baby Boomer	4.71	Millennials	5.71	0.003
			Gen-X	5.46	0.009
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Baby Boomer	3.63	Millennials	4.56	0.003
			Gen-X	4.58	0.000
Proximity to family and friends	Baby Boomer	4.49	Millennials	3.54	0.006
			Gen-X	3.51	0.001
School quality	Baby Boomer	1.93	Millennials	4.06	0.000
			Gen-X	4.21	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Baby Boomer	1.77	Millennials	2.56	0.010
			Gen-X	2.36	0.022
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.46	Millennials	1.67	0.000
			Gen-X	1.69	0.000
Attend or leave college	Baby Boomer	1.36	Millennials	2.04	0.005
			Gen-X	1.77	0.041

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 10 with a comparison of all metropolitan areas and the state in FIGURE 11 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 5. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX C: TEXAS DATA TABLES.

TEXAS: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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	OVERALL RANK	SINGLE	PARTNERED	NO KIDS	WITH KIDS	LOW INCOME	MIDDLE INCOME	HIGH INCOME	MILLENIALS	GEN-X	BABY BOOMERS
1	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property	Property
2	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Affordability	Neighborhood	Neighborhood	Convenience	Neighborhood	Neighborhood
3	Convenience	Convenience	Crime	Convenience	Crime	Family/Friends	Convenience	Convenience	Neighborhood	Crime	Crime
4	Crime	Crime	Convenience	Crime	Convenience	Convenience	Crime	Crime	Crime	Convenience	Convenience
5	Traffic	Traffic	Traffic	Traffic	Schools	Traffic	Affordability	Traffic	Traffic	Schools	Family/Friends
6	Affordability	Family/Friends	Affordability	Affordability	Traffic	Crime	Traffic	Affordability	Affordability	Traffic	Affordability
7	Family/Friends	Affordability	Schools	Family/Friends	Family/Friends	Schools	Family/Friends	Family/Friends	Family/Friends	Affordability	Traffic
8	Schools	Rent to Own	Family/Friends	Job Relocation	Affordability	Neighborhood	Schools	Schools	Schools	Family/Friends	Job Relocation
9	Job Relocation	Job Relocation	Job Relocation	Rent to Own	Job Relocation	Rent to Own	Job Relocation	Job Relocation	Rent to Own	Job Relocation	Schools
10	Rent to Own	Schools	Rent to Own	Schools	Rent to Own	Job Relocation	Rent to Own	Hipness	Job Relocation	Rent to Own	Hipness
11	Hipness	Relationship Change	Hipness	Hipness	Hipness	Relationship Change	Hipness	Rent to Own	Hipness	Hipness	Health/Disaster
12	Relationship Change	Hipness	Relationship Change	Relationship Change	Relationship Change	Hipness	Relationship Change	Relationship Change	Relationship Change	Relationship Change	Relationship Change
13	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Leave College	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Leave College	Leave College	Rent to Own
14	Leave College	Leave College	Leave College	Leave College	Leave College	Health/Disaster	Leave College	Leave College	Health/Disaster	Health/Disaster	Leave College

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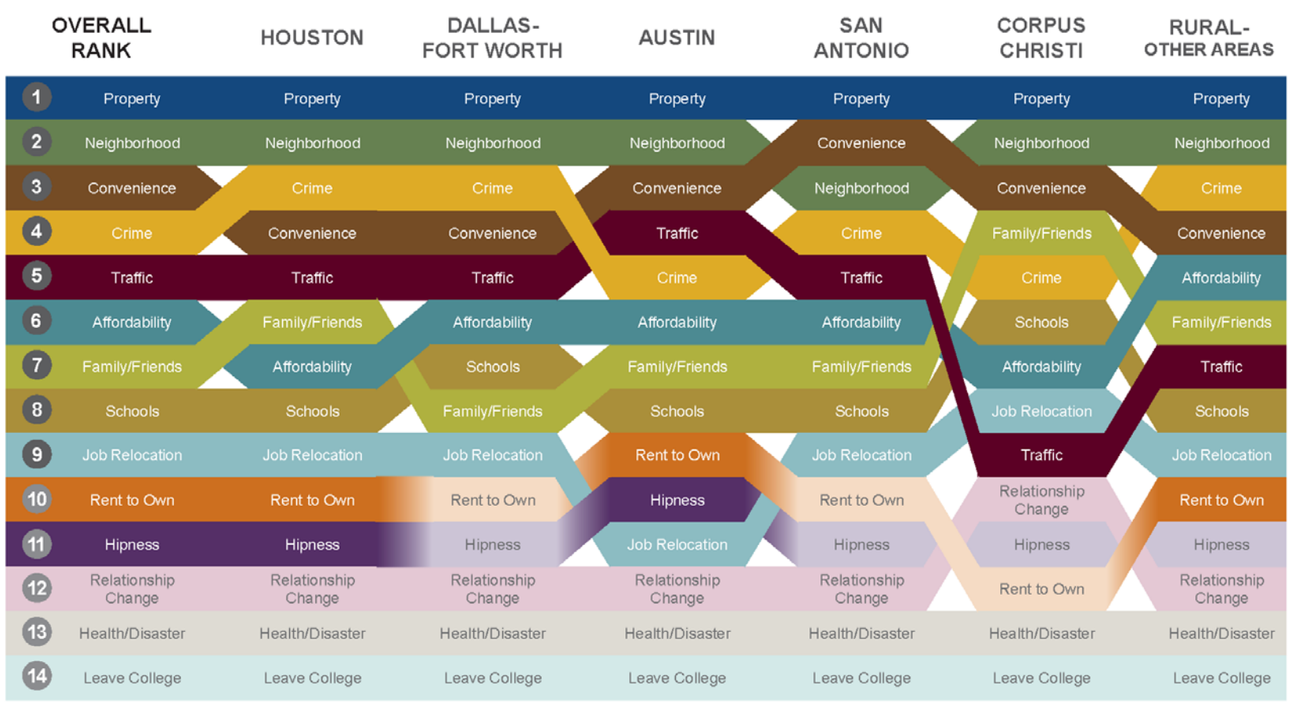
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 10 Texas: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

REGIONAL COMPARISON: Why Choose that Neighborhood?



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Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 11 Regional Comparison: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

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TABLE 5 Moving to a Texas Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.30	5.49	119265.0	0.005				
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)					4.91	4.69	187829.5	0.030
Traffic congestion or commute distance					4.65	4.26	180501.0	0.001
Proximity to family and friends	4.50	4.08	118757.5	0.004				
School quality	3.30	4.21	104963.0	0.000	3.36	4.47	148693.0	0.000
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.47	2.81	113547.5	0.000	3.37	2.68	169077.0	0.000
Cool factor or hipness					3.21	2.51	160819.5	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3.22	2.19	99710.0	0.000	2.79	2.23	172210.0	0.000
Attend or leave college	2.02	1.72	123434.0	0.012	1.97	1.72	187408.5	0.004
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.47	5.10	63213.5	0.010	5.50	5.18	76924.0	0.008
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation					5.02	4.72	77601.0	0.014
Crime or perceived safety	4.84	4.44	65095.0	0.041				
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.53	3.54	53418.5	0.000				
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)					4.35	3.94	78068.5	0.021
Proximity to family and friends					4.24	3.58	72795.0	0.000
School quality	4.13	2.48	44641.0	0.000				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					3.28	4.29	67938.0	0.000
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.10	1.99	54515.5	0.000	3.03	2.53	80189.0	0.049
Cool factor or hipness	2.83	2.24	58999.0	0.000	2.74	3.13	78445.5	0.021
Health reasons or natural disaster	1.87	2.30	66268.5	0.038				
Attend or leave college	1.82	1.65	65712.5	0.015				

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 6 and TABLE 7. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 6 Moving to a Texas Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 1321	11.17	0.000
Crime or perceived safety	3, 1321	3.31	0.019
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	3, 1321	11.97	0.000
Proximity to family and friends	3, 1321	3.66	0.012
School quality	3, 1321	4.42	0.004
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	3, 1321	15.36	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	3, 1321	4.16	0.006
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3, 1321	4.38	0.004
Health reasons or natural disaster	3, 1321	2.86	0.036
Attend or leave college	3, 1321	3.46	0.016
Generational Differences			
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	2, 1171	5.25	0.005
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	2, 1171	6.19	0.002
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 1171	18.52	0.000
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 1171	7.62	0.001
Proximity to family and friends	2, 1171	7.24	0.001
School quality	2, 1171	71.36	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 1171	50.54	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	2, 1171	18.94	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2, 1171	13.91	0.000
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 1171	7.52	0.001
Attend or leave college	2, 1171	13.64	0.000

TABLE 7 Moving to a Texas Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	High Income	5.27	Middle Income	4.94	0.000
			High Income	5.27	0.000
	Middle Income	4.94	High Income	5.27	0.011
Crime or perceived safety	Low Income	4.13	Middle Income	4.91	0.008
			High Income	4.84	0.016
Affordability	High Income	3.89	Low Income	4.76	0.003
(lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)			Middle Income	4.69	0.000
Proximity to family and friends	High Income	3.89	Low Income	4.60	0.029
			Middle Income	4.34	0.003
School quality	Middle Income	4.29	Low Income	3.83	0.001
			High Income	3.84	0.010
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	High Income	2.42	Low Income	3.52	0.002
			Middle Income	3.50	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	Low Income	2.44	High Income	3.04	0.036
Change in relationship status	High Income	2.21	Low Income	2.88	0.037
or establishment of household			Middle Income	2.70	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	High Income	1.79	Low Income	2.27	0.045
			Middle Income	2.07	0.013
Attend or leave college	High Income	1.67	Low Income	2.33	0.006
			Middle Income	1.93	0.022
Generational Differences					
Property type	Millennials	5.56	Gen-X	5.34	0.005
(bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)			Baby Boomer	5.28	0.005
Convenient access to services	Millennials	5.05	Gen-X	4.66	0.001
(banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)			Baby Boomer	4.65	0.005
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Baby Boomer	3.81	Millennials	4.82	0.000
			Gen-X	4.44	0.000
Affordability	Millennials	4.66	Gen-X	4.17	0.000
(lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)			Baby Boomer	4.14	0.002
Proximity to family and friends	Gen-X	3.91	Millennials	4.44	0.000
			Baby Boomer	4.29	0.017
School quality	Baby Boomer	2.48	Millennials	4.22	0.000
			Gen-X	4.46	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	3.86	Gen-X	2.83	0.000
			Baby Boomer	2.05	0.000
	Gen-X	2.83	Baby Boomer	2.05	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	Millennials	3.20	Gen-X	2.69	0.000
			Baby Boomer	2.30	0.000
	Gen-X	2.69	Baby Boomer	2.30	0.004
Change in relationship status	Millennials	2.92	Gen-X	2.37	0.000
or establishment of household			Baby Boomer	2.09	0.000
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.25	Millennials	1.84	0.001
			Gen-X	1.83	0.000
Attend or leave college	Baby Boomer	1.39	Millennials	2.03	0.000
			Gen-X	1.84	0.000

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 12 with a comparison of all metropolitan areas and the state in FIGURE 13 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 8. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX C: TEXAS DATA TABLES.

TABLE 8 Choosing a Home in Texas Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Type of house (single family detached, multifamily, etc.)	5.55	5.84	113658.5	0.000	5.67	5.81	185516.5	0.009
Number of bedrooms	5.17	5.41	118845.5	0.004	5.16	5.51	168362.0	0.000
Square footage	4.93	5.15	120378.0	0.010	4.94	5.17	181840.5	0.002
Presence of yard	4.72	5.20	112581.0	0.000	4.93	5.14	186924.0	0.021
Number of bathrooms	4.76	5.11	118031.0	0.002	4.88	5.15	176894.0	0.000
Acreage and/or lot size	3.93	4.59	107623.5	0.000				
Year structure was built/renovated	4.22	4.49	122262.0	0.030				
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.60	3.98	117582.5	0.002	3.72	3.95	187517.0	0.027
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Price	5.82	5.41	61223.5	0.002	5.78	5.59	79380.5	0.038
Type of house (single family detached, multifamily, etc.)					5.82	5.19	66999.5	0.000
Number of bedrooms	5.38	4.94	61325.5	0.002				
Square footage					5.10	4.71	74256.5	0.001
Presence of yard	5.10	4.66	62742.0	0.007	5.12	4.37	67812.0	0.000
Number of bathrooms	5.06	4.62	63541.0	0.013				
Acreage and/or lot size					4.56	3.18	51678.5	0.000
Year structure was built/renovated					4.46	3.64	65793.5	0.000
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without					3.88	3.45	76276.0	0.006

TEXAS: Why Choose that House?

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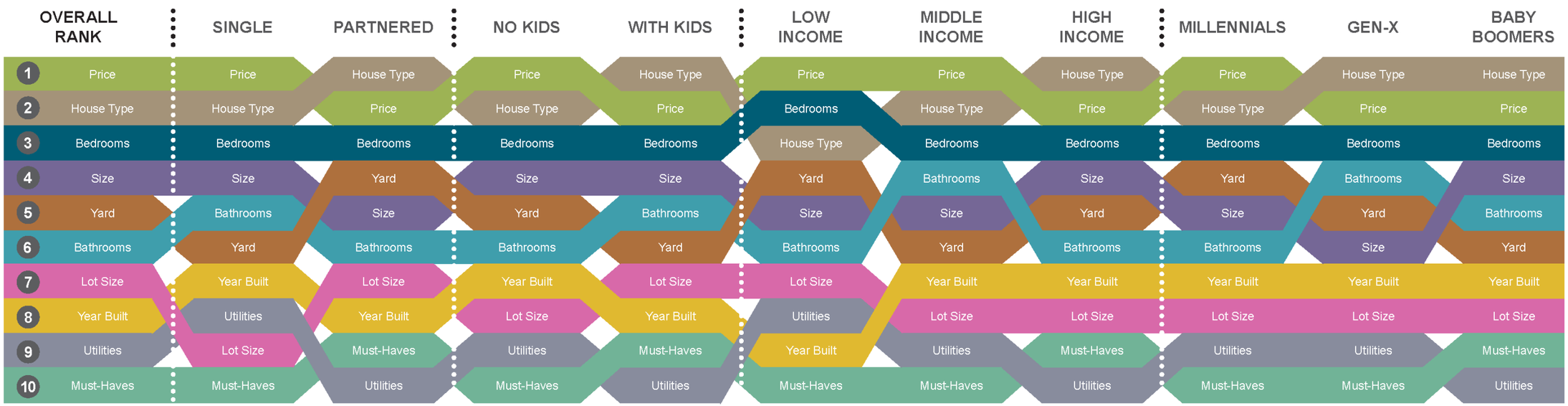


How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

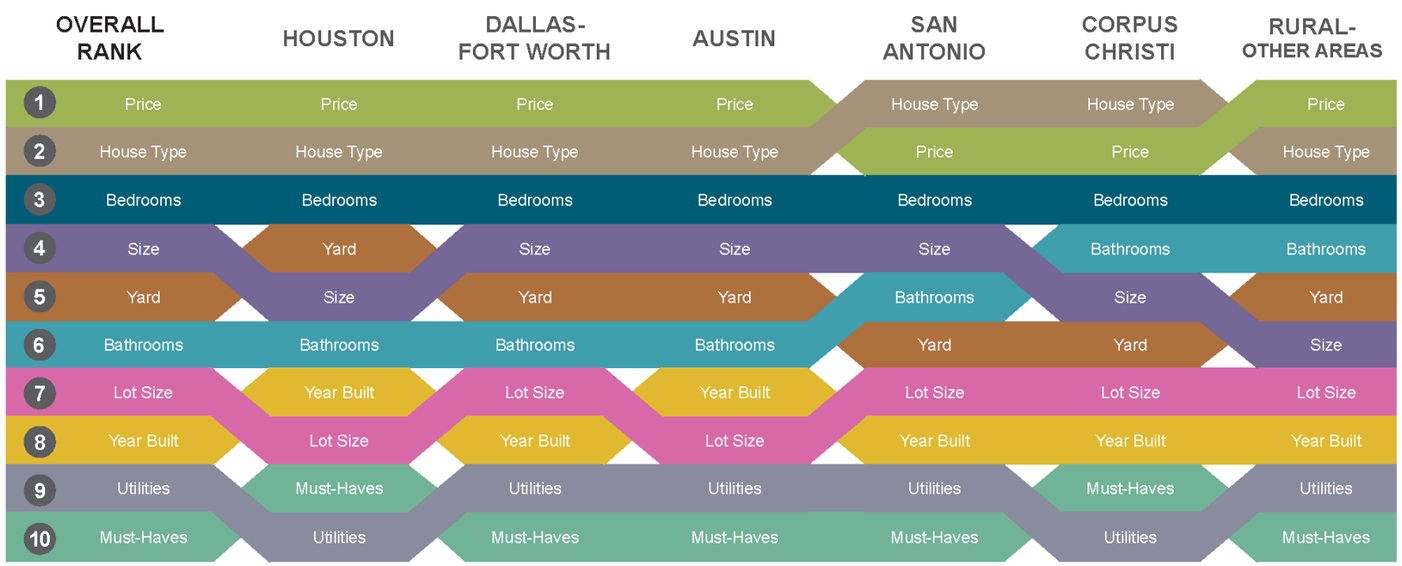
Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 12 Texas: Why Choose That House?

REGIONAL COMPARISON: Why Choose that House?



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Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 13 Regional Comparison: Why Choose That House?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 9 and TABLE 10. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences in the income group.

TABLE 9 Choosing a Home in Texas ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Price	3, 1321	7.09	0.000
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	3, 1321	3.58	0.013
Year structure was built/renovated	3, 1321	3.38	0.018
Cost of utilities	3, 1321	9.39	0.000
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3, 1321	4.73	0.003
Generational Differences			
Price	2, 1171	13.55	0.000
Number of bedrooms	2, 1171	5.79	0.003
Presence of yard	2, 1171	5.91	0.003
Number of bathrooms	2, 1171	5.43	0.004
Year structure was built/renovated	2, 1171	3.30	0.037

TABLE 10 Choosing a Home in Texas LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Price	High Income	5.54	Low Income	6.19	0.001
			Middle Income	5.92	0.000
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	Low Income	5.06	Middle Income	5.75	0.002
			High Income	5.78	0.001
Year structure was built/renovated	Low Income	3.65	Middle Income	4.45	0.003
			High Income	4.46	0.003
Cost of utilities	High Income	3.56	Low Income	4.31	0.004
			Middle Income	4.16	0.000
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	Low Income	3.17	Middle Income	3.89	0.015
			High Income	4.07	0.003

TABLE 10 Continued

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Price	Millennials	6.03	Gen-X	5.74	0.002
			Baby Boomer	5.48	0.000
	Gen-X	5.74	Baby Boomer	5.48	0.007
Number of bedrooms	Baby Boomer	5.47	Millennials	5.38	0.007
			Gen-X	5.43	0.001
Presence of yard	Baby Boomer	4.72	Millennials	5.15	0.002
			Gen-X	5.13	0.002
Number of bathrooms	Baby Boomer	4.74	Millennials	5.01	0.037
			Gen-X	5.14	0.001
Year structure was built/renovated	Gen-X	4.45	Baby Boomer	4.21	0.012

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the six ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX C: TEXAS DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Why Move to the Region?

Respondents were first asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular region or metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the

respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area. All ranked factors in this section are presented in this context.

Texans Overall

Across the state, respondents noted that ultimately the specific property their buyer chose is the most important factor when deciding where to live. This is followed closely by a job relocation. This means that the house itself is the primary focal point of the location. The survey indicates that people do not move to Texas or another Texas city for a specific house. For moving to the region, relocating to a job or career change is the most important factor.

When choosing a region, buyers place a significantly high importance on all nine relevant factors shown in the chart, though buyers seem to be most concerned with crime and neighborhood reputation and amenities over other elements such as schools or traffic. This is likely due to having little choice in the region due to a new job or other factors.

Singles versus Couples

Both singles and couples rank a job relation and the property itself as the two most important factors in choosing a region in Texas. Even though relocating for a job is the number-one reason for singles to choose a metropolitan area, couples gave this attribute a higher mean importance score, likely indicating that there are things more broadly important in the decision-making process for singles than couples. Singles view being close to family and friends, transitioning from renting to owning, and changing relationship status more important when compared to couples. For couples, factors such as neighborhood reputation and convenience are more important than for singles.

Children versus No Children

Families with children appear to make housing decisions very similarly to those without children, sharing the top five factors. However, those with children place a significantly higher importance on the property itself (likely needing specific qualities in a home to

meet their children's needs) and on school quality. Parents want what is best for their children, including a quality education and safe metropolitan area.

Income Considerations

Some of the most dramatic differences in home location importance can be seen across income tiers. Most noticeably, crime ranks as a greater concern by two positions, and nearness to family and friends ranks six places more important for low-income households than middle- and high-income groups (even though it is not significantly different from other groups). Crime may be a bigger issue in low-income neighborhoods, and nearness to family may help address some of the problems. This could indicate a dependence on those family members and friends for child care or other forms of support. For low-income households, moving to the area is much more likely due to health issues, a disaster, college, or job relocation.

Neighborhood reputation and aesthetics, convenience, and the property itself also significantly matter less for low-income households while mattering significantly more for high-income households. This could indicate a sort of needs pyramid where low-income households place basic desires ahead of aesthetic ones.

For middle-income households in Texas, affordability of the metropolitan area trumps most other factors in the location decision, showing a potential sensitivity to price when basic needs are met. Aesthetics and comforts still rank lower than they do for high-income buyers.

Generational Divides

Generation X and millennial responses are fairly similar to one another because they share similar rankings and importance scores that are not significantly different from one another. Job relocation ranks as the most important factor for millennials, with affordability also jumping a couple importance ranks.

Baby boomers value nearness to family and friends significantly higher than other generations, perhaps related to later-life care and being close to grandchildren. Traffic concerns fall significantly lower than other generations as do school quality (which was not important at all in their decision). Baby boomers are also significantly less likely to move to a region due to a job change compared to other generations, reinforcing their likely move to be near friends and family.

Additional Findings

Buyers who are underemployed cite health concerns, natural disasters, and nearness to family and friends—the personal social safety net types of factors—as much more important than those who were steadily employed.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within a metropolitan area. This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

Texans Overall

Across the board, the property characteristics are again by far the most important part of the housing location decision for all Texans, followed closely in all cases (except two: millennials and low-income households) by the neighborhood's reputation and amenities. Convenience, crime, and traffic round out the most important factors that Texans in all groups use to choose a neighborhood. This likely indicates that while the house is most important, the livability of the neighborhood trumps other factors. Affordability and family rank in the next group most frequently. Traffic considerations are in the upper half across most demographic groups.

Relocating due to a job or career change drops significantly at the neighborhood scale. This is because people generally have to relocate cities when they get a new job but do not necessarily have to move if their new job is in the same city.

Singles versus Couples

As one might imagine, couples place a significantly greater importance on school quality than singles and make sacrifices in other areas to get it. In the case of singles, while school quality is still important in their location process (likely because of the notion of future children or that better schools roughly equal better neighborhoods), the factor ranks near the bottom of their list. And while property is first for both singles and couples, it is significantly more important for couples.

For singles, locating near family and friends and making the transition from renting to owning are much more important than for couples, perhaps reflecting the importance of a support system for those living on their own, while partners play that role for each other. Singles give up more concern for affordability than couples.

Children versus No Children

Families with children (not surprisingly) place a significantly high value on school quality when selecting a neighborhood—much more so than couples. These families, like couples, also place a slightly higher importance on crime in an area, expressing a higher sensitivity to this than most other groups.

Those without children, however, give significantly greater importance to the traffic, convenience, and affordability of the neighborhood. The hipness of the neighborhood is a significant factor for childless owners while not making the list for those with children. This again shows a relative hierarchy of need: those without dependents can place their attention on things important to their quality of life rather than the needs of others.

Income Considerations

The differences between income tiers appear to dominate the movement in the chart. Affordability and nearness to family and friends fill out the top three spots with low-income households. They are more sensitive to the price of a neighborhood than other income tiers and therefore might have more limited choices. They also likely rely heavily on family and friends for support and child care. These families are less sensitive

to neighborhood reputation and crime in the area—perhaps due to their lack of options compared to high-income households than to their level of concern.

As income increases, concerns about affordability, family/friends factors, and transitioning from renting to owning decline. Neighborhood factors, convenience, and crime factors increase. Hipness becomes a significant factor only for high-income buyers/renters. Again, the wealthier are able to afford and demand more convenience and amenities than other tiers.

Generational Divides

When choosing a neighborhood, while each generation of Texans holds a unique set of values, the same set of four factors are at the top. All three generations value the property most of all, followed by neighborhood reputation and amenities, crime rate, and the convenience of services near them. Millennials, though, place a significantly higher importance on convenience than older generations. Millennials also view traffic, affordability, the hipness of the area, and transitioning from renting to owning much more importantly than other generations. This could indicate a greater desire to be in the midst of the action rather than in a quieter location and an ability to ignore concerns about issues such as school quality or job relocation.

Conversely, baby boomers place a higher value on nearness to family and friends or moving, perhaps due to health reasons and less on traffic and school quality than other generations. This could then indicate that reaching a level of comfort before or at retirement is more important than those factors would have been earlier in life.

Generation X values schools extremely highly but values nearness to family and friends lower than both other groups. This could indicate that this age group places a higher value on locating near amenities for their children than other family or social concerns.

Additional Findings

While not presented in the chart, those who chose to rent consider the hipness of the neighborhood and the convenience of all the surrounding services much more important than buyers.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house causes Texans to value other factors much lower in their location decision?

Texans Overall

First, all the factors surveyed about why a person chose a particular property played a significant role in the process. None of the factors were unimportant among any demographic. *This indicates that when searching for a new property, greater importance may be placed on property-specific factors than some of the factors associated with location*.

Both price and the type of house (single-family detached, townhome, condominium, multifamily, etc.) nearly tie for first place when choosing a home. Buyers appear to first look at their price range and then narrow the field down to the type of structure. After these decisions are made, bedrooms are the most frequently considered. Home size, yard size, and the number of bathrooms are in the next most frequently considered group of factors.

Singles versus Couples

The primary differences between singles and couples in purchasing a home lie in the role that price plays (including utilities) and the yard. The cost factors are valued more highly by singles than by couples, likely due to lower incomes. Couples, on the other hand, value homes with yards and larger lot size more importantly than singles.

Couples score all factors (except costs) higher overall than singles do, even if they are ranked the same. This means that all these factors are generally considered more carefully by couples than singles, and singles are likely more flexible in the criteria they use to find a home.

Children versus No Children

Households with children strikingly resemble the same patterns as those that are couples (and similarly so with those with no children and singles). Overall, this is not surprising: the type of house is the most important factor, and those with children rank all factors more important with the exception of those concerning the cost of living.

The primary difference, then, between couples and those with children (since the singles and couples cohorts are nearly identical to those without and with children, respectively) lies in the size of the house versus the presence of a yard. Families with children value the amount of living space far above the presence of a yard (it being almost a luxury).

Income Considerations

Not surprisingly, the price and cost of utilities become greater issues as a buyer's income declines. Middle-income buyers place a significantly higher importance on price and cost of utilities than high-income buyers. Low-income buyers put a greater importance on both.

Low-income buyers put significantly less importance on the year the property was built, the type of house (whether it was a single-family home, townhouse, or condominium), and particular upgrades that they wanted. These buyers appear to look more for basics within their price range: whether the house serves their needs, how many bedrooms it has, and whether it has a yard.

Generational Divides

The generational views on choosing a home are similar, with price, house type, and the number of bedrooms being at the top of all lists. Millennials place a significantly higher

importance on what they can afford than older buyers, likely due to their relative newness to the market.

Millennials value the yard size more and number of baths less than the other generations. Baby boomers, however, place much less value on basics such as the number of bedrooms, the number of bathrooms, and the cost of utilities more than baby boomers. Baby boomers, instead, are able to focus much more attention on upgrades and the overall size of the home more than other generations.

Additional Findings

Not surprisingly, renters place a significantly higher importance on the cost of utilities over buyers. However, they place a lower importance on square footage and price.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 30 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

The most common reason cited as a deal clincher for their client involved something specific to the house—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 14). Even though must-have home upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer.

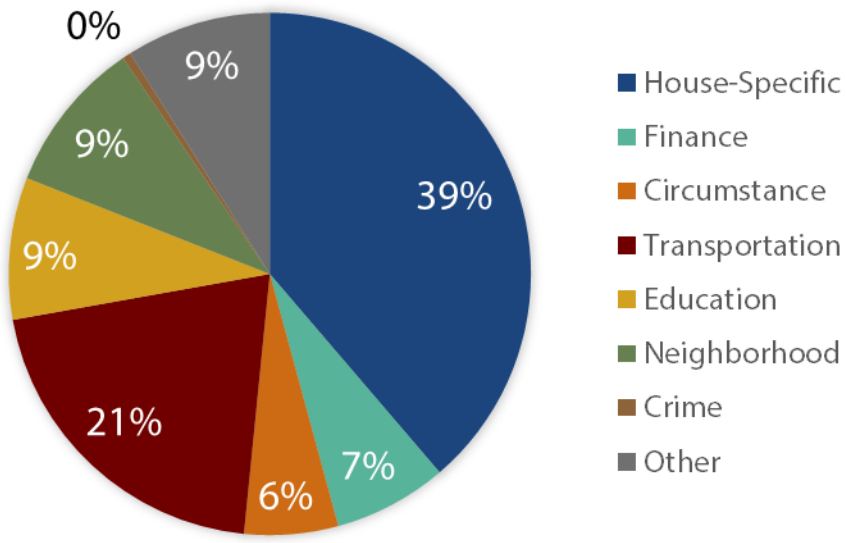

FIGURE 14 Open Responses Given for Texas.

Transportation concerns contributed another fifth of those other reasons. Respondents said that many of their clients wanted to be close to work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. In the previous neighborhood section, these responses represent a balanced mixture of convenience, family and friends, and traffic. In many cases, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, convenience, and ultimately the property itself. Many of these factors also appear in the list of deal-clinching factors.

Access to public transit or walkable and bikeable communities also appears significantly in these comments. This was especially true for buyers in many of the larger urban areas where access to public transit or walkable and bikeable communities is becoming more popular for developers and cities in order to attract different demographics.

THE AUSTIN METROPOLITAN AREA

The Austin metropolitan area has been rapidly growing over the last decade, frequently noted as one of the (if not the) fastest growing large metropolitan areas in the United States. An infusion of technology, culture, and young people from around the state and the nation has contributed to the region's rapid growth. When residents move to or within the city, what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section summarizes the survey results from Austin REALTORS® about their last transaction and the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX D: AUSTIN DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understanding who lives in Austin is important to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they do. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates an approximate 2,000,000 people live in the Austin metropolitan area. Of this cohort, each generation is split roughly evenly with the exception of baby boomers, whose population is at least four percent less than other groups. FIGURE 15 provides a demographic snapshot of the Austin metropolitan area included in this survey (*85,86,87,88*).

While a significant percentage of the area's households makes less than $35,000 per year, it is lowest compared to other urban areas studied, likely due to a high cost of living. Income is otherwise spread relatively evenly with the median household income around $65,500.

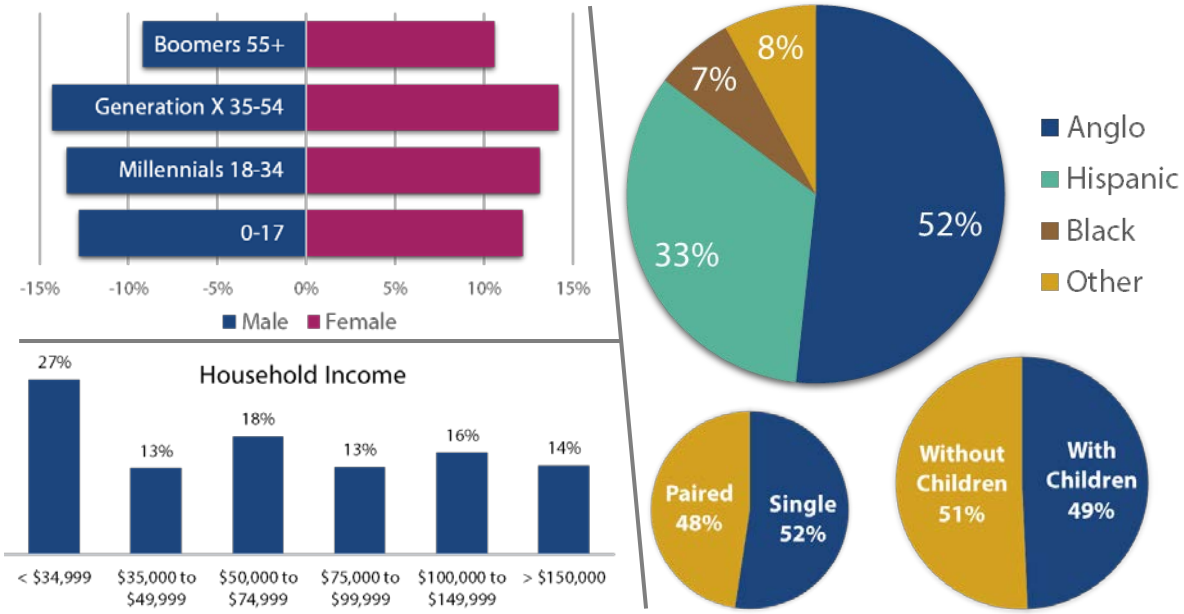

FIGURE 15 Austin Metropolitan Area Demographic Profile.

While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[11], knowing the racial composition of the Austin area is still important. Austin remains majority Anglo with a secondary and growing Hispanic population, both comprising 85 percent of the total population. Slightly less than half of the population is married and less than half have children. The proportion of those with children is significantly higher compared to other urban areas and the state in general.

Housing Profile

The Austin metropolitan area includes Travis and Williamson Counties as well as the surrounding counties of Hays, Caldwell, and Bastrop. Of the respondents surveyed, 84 percent of their last transactions were for home purchases. The remaining 14 percent either leased or rented.

[11] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

From the survey, 58 percent of all home sales in the Austin area were less than $300,000, with another 22 percent between $300,000 and $400,000, making Austin the most expensive housing market in the survey (FIGURE 16). The distribution of surveyed sales prices compared to actual sales prices in Austin in 2015 reveals a close correlation between the two, giving validity to the local responses. Rental properties under $1,500 per month represent more than half of the rental/lease transactions, with over 95 percent under $2,000 per month.

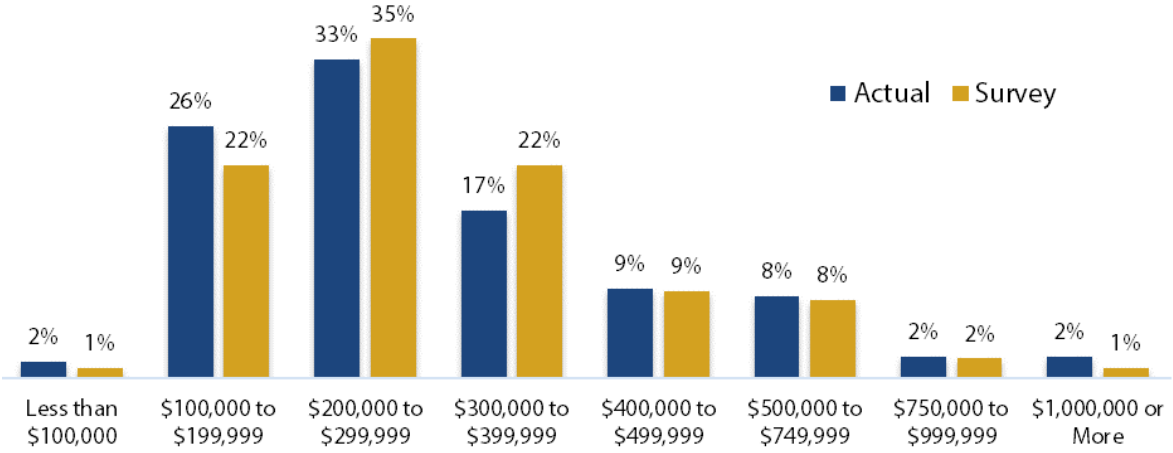

FIGURE 16 Survey Distribution of Austin Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In the Austin metropolitan area, there were a total of 182 completed and valid responses with 50 moving from outside the region to Austin. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing the Austin Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 17 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 11. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX D: AUSTIN DATA TABLES.

TABLE 11 Moving to Austin Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	4.18	6.03	88.0	0.004				
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	4.09	5.61	98.5	0.010				
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3.27	5.67	65.5	0.001				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					4.64	6.55	105.5	0.008

TABLE 11 Continued

Factor (continued)	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	6.03	4.15	134.0	0.014
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	5.62	4.08	147.5	0.033
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	5.38	3.92	142.0	0.025
Crime or perceived safety	5.76	3.85	142.5	0.025
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.89	3.31	138.0	0.021
School quality	4.19	2.08	120.0	0.006
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.19	1.85	148.5	0.028

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 12 and TABLE 13. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. Note that for the income group in Austin, there were not enough responses to create a significant sample size for the low income category. Additionally, there were no significant differences within the income group.

TABLE 12 Moving to Austin ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	2, 46	4.15	0.022
School quality	2, 46	9.55	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 46	3.19	0.050

TABLE 13 Moving to Austin LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	Baby Boomer	4.59	Gen-X	6.16	0.007
School quality	Baby Boomer	1.88	Millennials	4.08	0.007
			Gen-X	4.89	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Baby Boomer	1.71	Millennials	3.38	0.044
			Gen-X	3.37	0.028

AUSTIN: Why Move to the Region?

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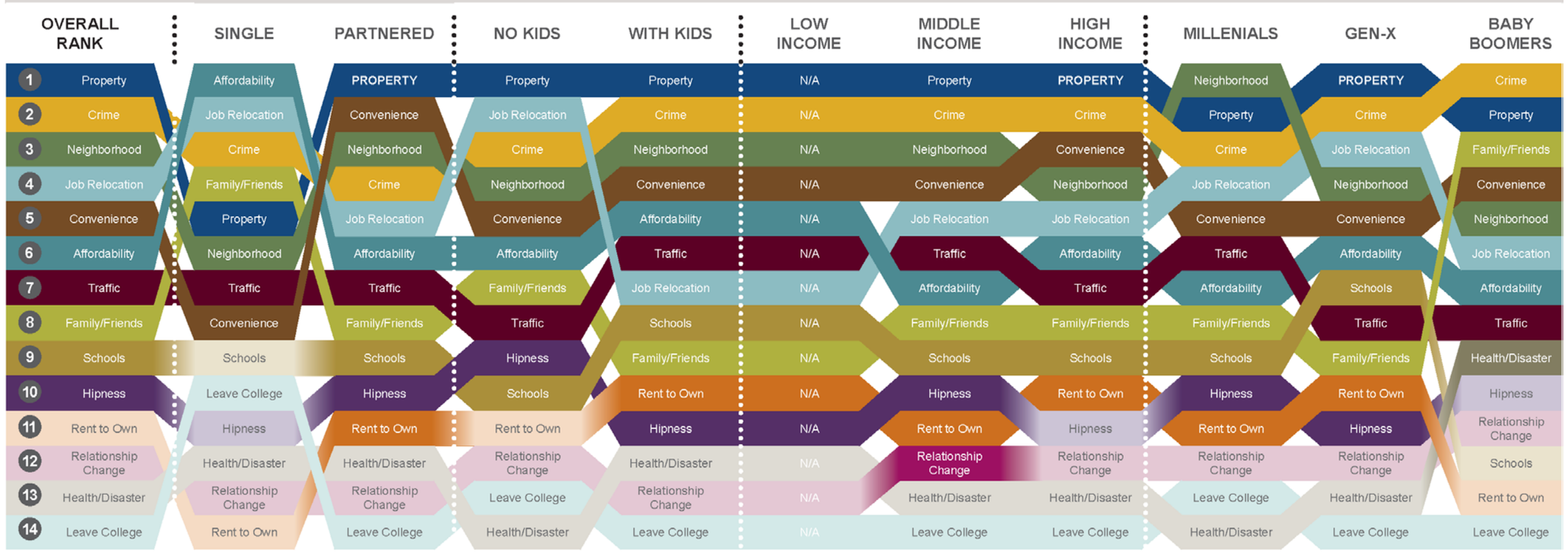

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

N.A. — There were not enough responses in this demographic to reach the statistically appropriate sample size for analysis.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 17 Austin: Why Move to the Region?

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 18 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 14. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX D: AUSTIN DATA TABLES.

TABLE 14 Moving to an Austin Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
School quality	3.39	4.37	1923.0	0.015	3.43	5.04	2332.0	0.000
Cool factor or hipness					3.77	2.99	2980.5	0.008
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2.61	3.30	2051.0	0.046				
Change in relationship status or establishment of household					3.06	2.36	3120.0	0.017
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.57	4.56	890.5	0.037				
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	5.10	4.17	867.0	0.027				
School quality	4.14	2.78	841.0	0.019				
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.55	1.89	778.0	0.005				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					2.96	4.00	1673.5	0.026
Change in relationship status or establishment of household					2.59	3.52	1685.0	0.025
Attend or leave college					1.80	2.72	1677.0	0.009

AUSTIN: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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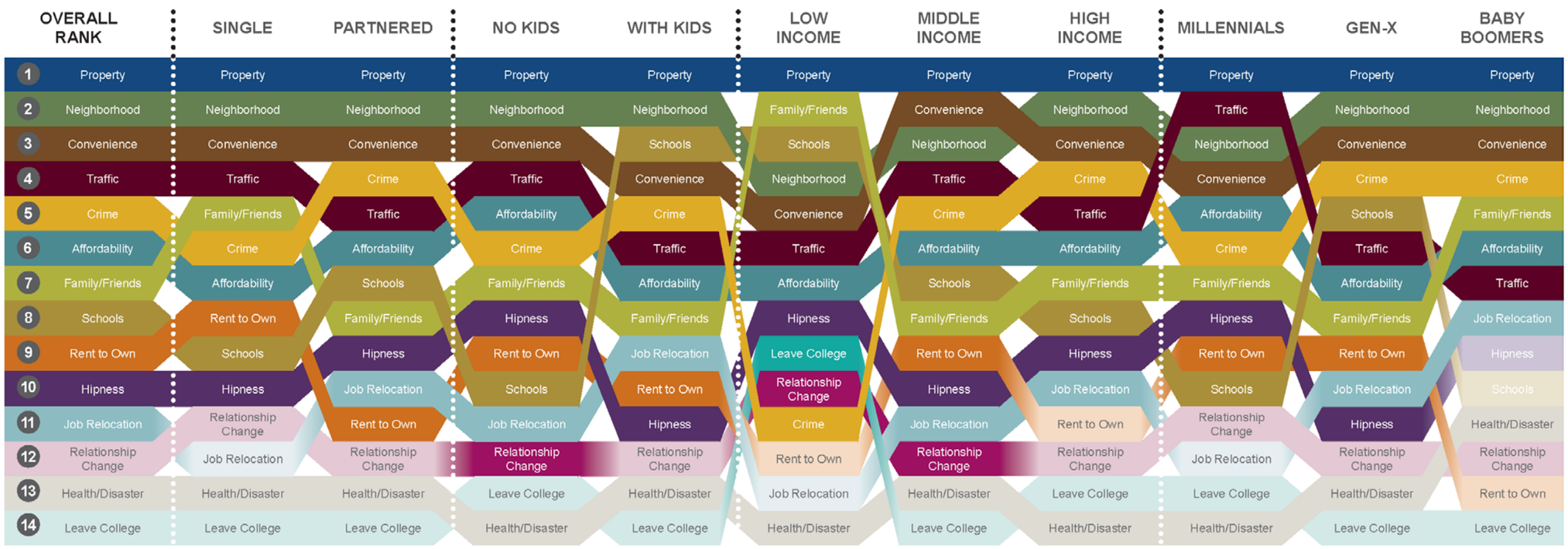


How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 18 Austin: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 15 and TABLE 16. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 15 Moving to an Austin Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Health reasons or natural disaster	3, 178	4.61	0.004
Attend or leave college	3, 178	2.86	0.038
Generational Differences			
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	2, 153	5.25	0.006
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	2, 153	3.33	0.039
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 153	7.14	0.001
School quality	2, 153	12.24	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 153	8.53	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	2, 153	7.44	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 153	3.18	0.044

TABLE 16 Moving to an Austin Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Health reasons or natural disaster	Middle Income	2.54	High Income	1.54	0.001
Attend or leave college	Low Income	3.67	High Income	1.60	0.039
Generational Differences					
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	Baby Boomer	4.78	Millennials	5.78	0.002
			Gen-X	5.55	0.013
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	Baby Boomer	4.39	Millennials	5.16	0.026
			Gen-X	5.18	0.018
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Millennials	5.40	Gen-X	4.43	0.008
			Baby Boomer	3.89	0.000
School quality	Gen-X	4.91	Millennials	3.71	0.004
			Baby Boomer	2.67	0.000
	Millennials	3.71	Baby Boomer	2.67	0.031
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Baby Boomer	1.97	Millennials	3.95	0.000
			Gen-X	3.62	0.001
Cool factor or hipness	Millennials	4.16	Gen-X	3.06	0.002
			Baby Boomer	2.78	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.47	Millennials	1.62	0.013

Choosing the House

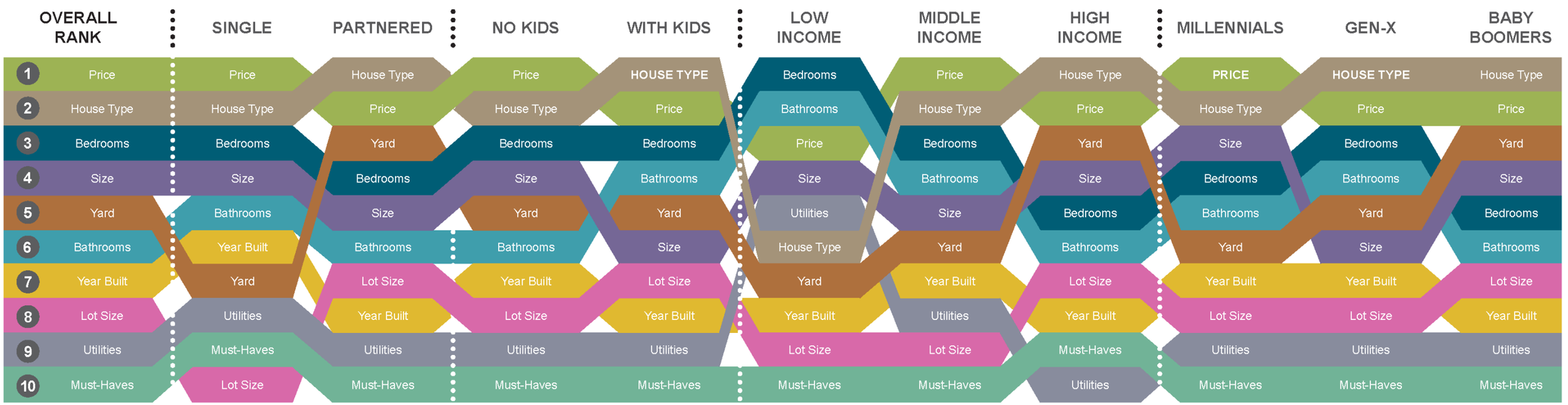
The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 19 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 17. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX D: AUSTIN DATA TABLES.

TABLE 17 Choosing a Home in Austin Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Type of house (single family detached, condo, townhouse, multifamily, etc.)	5.12	6.04	1644.5	0.000	5.53	5.97	3044.0	0.011
Number of bedrooms	4.88	5.48	1870.0	0.008	5.01	5.62	2977.0	0.007
Presence of yard	3.84	5.49	1372.0	0.000				
Number of bathrooms	4.51	5.17	2042.0	0.049	4.62	5.27	2926.5	0.004
Acreage and/or lot size	3.31	4.69	1573.0	0.000				
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Type of house (single family detached, condo, townhouse, multifamily, etc.)					5.82	4.97	1382.5	0.001
Presence of yard					5.11	4.07	1433.5	0.002
Number of bathrooms	5.05	3.89	844.5	0.019				
Year structure was built/renovated	4.50	3.61	885.5	0.037	4.39	3.72	1659.0	0.029
Acreage and/or lot size					4.51	2.93	1166.5	0.000
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.68	2.78	861.0	0.025				

AUSTIN: Why Choose that House?



How to Read This Chart

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Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 19 Austin: Why Choose That House?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 18 and TABLE 19. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences in the income group.

TABLE 18 Choosing a Home in Austin ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
Price	2, 153	3.62	0.029
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2, 153	4.35	0.015
Number of bedrooms	2, 153	5.41	0.005
Number of bathrooms	2, 153	5.52	0.005
Acreage and/or lot size	2, 153	3.41	0.036

TABLE 19 Choosing a Home in Austin LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Price	Millennials	5.96	Baby Boomer	5.19	0.008
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	Gen-X	6.11	Millennials	5.51	0.026
			Baby Boomer	5.31	0.009
Number of bedrooms	Gen-X	5.66	Millennials	5.07	0.044
			Baby Boomer	4.61	0.002
Number of bathrooms	Gen-X	5.38	Millennials	4.69	0.019
			Baby Boomer	4.36	0.002
Acreage and/or lot size	Millennials	3.78	Gen-X	4.68	0.012

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX D: AUSTIN DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Austin versus Texas

Choosing the Austin Area

Like most other metropolitan areas, Austinites rank the property and attributes about the neighborhood (reputation, amenities, and aesthetics) highly compared to other factors. But while Austinites mirror much of the rest of Texas in selecting the area, there are some subtle differences. Austinites rank relocating because of a job or career change much lower than any other metropolitan region except Corpus Christi. Instead, they value the area's low crime rate and hipness more than their fellow Texans.

Choosing a Neighborhood

However, when selecting a specific neighborhood, crime plays a much lower part in the decision. Instead, traffic becomes much more relevant. Traffic congestion and commute times seem to be more strongly connected to neighborhood attributes and convenience. The hip factor of the area again plays an important role (Houston is the only other metropolitan area in Texas where this is important).

Selecting the Right House

Like every other area in Texas, the home itself is the most important factor in the housing location decision. And like many of the larger metropolitan areas, price remains the most important factor. In fact, Austin mirrors the rest of Texas except for less importance placed on the size of the lot (as in Houston). Residents in both locations are likely more accustomed to higher-density living than residents in other areas.

Why Move to Austin?

Respondents were first asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the Austin metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area. All the ranked factors in this section are under this context.

Austinites Overall

Austin respondents noted that the specific property their buyer chose is by far the most important factor when deciding where to live. While the house itself is the primary focal point of the location decision, it is not necessarily why people move to a new state or city. For moving to the Austin area, relocating due to Austin's low crime rate, unique reputation, or a new job or career change is the most important.

Generally, the affordability of the region does not play that important of a role for those moving from another area. This could indicate that while real estate prices are rising in Austin, the area is still fairly affordable when compared to other tech-centered locations in the United States.

Singles versus Couples

Singles differ the most from any other demographic moving to Austin, primarily being much more sensitive to the affordability of the area, ranking this as the most important factor for moving to Austin. Singles care much less about the property itself, the neighborhood, or any convenience factors, but instead view being closer to family or friends as a deciding factor.

Couples, however, give extremely high importance to moving to the region based on the types of property available. This may also be reflective of the region's relative affordability.

Children versus No Children

While there are no significantly different ratings of importance between those with and without children, families with children tend to rank the area's traffic and school quality much higher than those without children. These families are also the least likely to move to the region because of a job change.

However, a new job or family and friends are more important for those without children. Additionally, Austin's reputation as a cool city may make a greater difference to these buyers.

Income Considerations

The sample size for low-income households moving to the Austin area from another state or region was too low to create a reasonable estimate of importance rankings, so they are not included in this examination. The middle- and high-income buyers do not have significantly different ratings, although middle-income buyers cite more reasons to move to the area (health, disaster, and relationship changes) than other demographics. Both groups do give a higher importance to the convenience Austin offers, and high-income buyers place extreme importance on the house itself.

Generational Divides

Differences between generations are slight but fairly pronounced. Baby boomers are more concerned about crime and nearness to family and friends than those younger than they. Additionally, they are more likely to move to the area for health concerns.

Millennials, while generally similar to generation X in most factors, rank the quality of the city, its reputation, and amenities much higher than others. These buyers care more about Austin's reputation, traffic, and hipness and less about schools than their older neighbors. Baby boomers, as might be expected, do not even consider schools or the hipness of the city when relocating.

Additional Findings

Buyers who are underemployed moving to Austin are much more likely to cite being close to family and friends or moving due to health or a disaster than any other group.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within Austin. This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

Austinites Overall

Property is, as with the regional choice, the most important factor in the housing location decision and remains so across every case when buyers are selecting a neighborhood. This is distantly followed by the neighborhood's reputation, amenities, and convenience. The distance in ranking (even though these are the top three) reveals that in Austin, when a buyer finds the right house, it does not matter as much what neighborhood it is in (or many other factors).

Traffic congestion, crime in the area, and the general affordability of the neighborhood follow distantly after the top three. While these are important factors and likely played an important role initially, they drop in importance when other more tangible factors present themselves. The neighborhood's hipness also more noticeably comes into play at this scale.

Relocating due to a job or career change drops significantly at this scale. This is likely due to the notion that people generally have to relocate cities when they get a new job but do not necessarily have to move if their new job is in the same city but farther away.

Singles versus Couples

Understandably, couples weigh schools much higher in their location decision than singles. This includes those who do not yet have children, likely showing an eventual

desire for children. Couples are also more sensitive to the neighborhood's crime rate or having to relocate due to a job change.

Singles, on the other hand, consider nearness to family and friends more important than their coupled counterparts. These buyers are also much more interested in making the transition from renting to owning a home.

Children versus No Children

The appreciation for quality schools dramatically increases for those with children, rising to one of the highest levels in any Texas metropolitan area and displacing convenience, crime, traffic, and affordability.

As a stark contrast, those without children place a much higher importance on factors such as affordability, traffic, and the hipness of the neighborhood.

Income Considerations

While middle- and high-income households are relatively similar to each other and to the overall case in Austin, low-income households reveal a dramatically different pattern for concerns about finding a home. These families rely heavily on being located close to family and friends—likely as a support system—and the quality of the local schools. Low-income households also place a very low importance on the crime of the area, ranking it near the bottom of the list. This may likely be due to a lack of choice. Low-income households weigh being in a cool neighborhood higher than middle- or high-income households.

Generational Divides

While baby boomers and generation X are fairly similar, millennials differ dramatically. Traffic congestion and travel time are extremely important to millennials, jumping to the number-two spot just under the home itself. Affordability and the hipness of the neighborhood also make significant increases in importance for millennials over other generations, echoing those with no children.

Baby boomers, on the other hand, score most attributes as lower importance than other generations, putting basics such as the property and convenience of the neighborhood lower in importance than the other generations (even though they are ranked the same in the chart). Baby boomers also care much less about traffic and much more about nearness to family and friends than other cohorts.

While generation X represents a middle ground between baby boomers and millennials, generation X does noticeably place a high importance on school quality. This is likely due to a greater number of them having school-age children.

Additional Findings

Renters are more likely to select a neighborhood based on a relocating for a job, changing a relationship status (e.g., getting married), or leaving college.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house makes Austinites weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

Austinites Overall

While Austinites rate price as the most important factor overall, not every demographic sees it that way, with many looking more at the type of house (or townhome, condominium, duplex, etc.) they wish to purchase. Over the past few years, the housing stock in Austin has diversified, giving residents many more choices than before.

Austinites value choice in their options: both the size of the home and whether the property has a yard rank highly overall and among many types of buyers.

Singles versus Couples

While singles value price, couples value the type of property—a lot. For couples, the type of home qualifies as so important that it is possibly the deciding factor in many cases. Couples also place a higher importance score on the number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, and square footage even though couples rank them lower than single buyers. This likely indicates a stronger preference and a lower likelihood to settle on a property they do not like.

Instead, singles appear to value elements such as the cost of utilities and must-have upgrades while placing much less value on the lot size or whether the property has a yard. This likely reveals either a preference or affinity toward townhouse or condominium living for singles.

Children versus No Children

Families with children also place an extremely high importance on the type of property they are purchasing in addition to the number of bedrooms and bathrooms. This likely reveals a very practical purchasing decision to ensure the home meets their family's basic needs.

Those without children closely resemble the same preferences as singles with a couple exceptions: Buyers without children place a much higher importance on the presence of a yard and the lot size. When compared with families with children, the primary difference is more importance given to square footage.

Income Considerations

When considering income stratification, there are no statistically significant differences between the groups, though ranking differences are present. Low-income households look for factors that meet their needs for the price, ranking the number of bedrooms and bathrooms of utmost importance. The cost of utilities ranks closely to price because these buyers are more sensitive to changes in their monthly costs. For low-income buyers, must-have features are not at all important in their decision.

For high-income buyers, luxuries such as a yard, must-have features, and square footage rank higher than for their middle-income peers. While price is a factor, again the type of home is more important.

Generational Divides

While there are significant differences between generations, they are not unexpected. Baby boomers tend to resemble the preferences seen in high-income buyers, deviating only slightly from them in the Austin area. Baby boomers give much more importance to the presence of a yard and much less importance to bedrooms and bathrooms than other generations.

While millennials resemble generation X in ranking, generation X actually differs the most. They place a primary importance on home type and rank the number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, and lot size significantly higher than other generations.

Millennials are much more sensitive to price, making that the deciding factor for them. Millennials also value their space over the number of rooms, ranking square footage significantly higher than others.

Additional Findings

Buyers who look to purchase a home are also much choosier about the type of home, considering factors such as the presence of a yard, lot size, and year built. This would likely indicate that home buyers largely prefer detached American Dream homes than those renting.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 37 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

Austin respondents cite something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 20). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, according to respondent comments, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer.

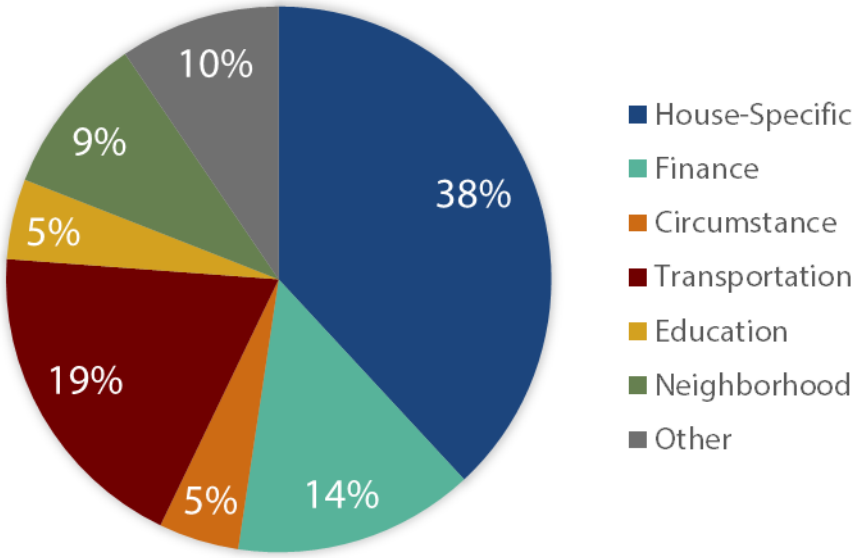

FIGURE 20 Open Responses Given for Austin.

Transportation concerns contribute another fifth of those other reasons. Respondents cite that many of their clients want to be close to work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. In the Why Choose That Neighborhood? section, these responses represent a balanced mixture of convenience, family and friends, and traffic. In many cases, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially

important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, convenience, and ultimately the property itself. The one exception to this can be found in millennials, who view traffic and travel times as extremely important to their location decision.

Access to public transit or walkable and bikeable communities appears frequently in these comments—more in Austin than other urban areas. This increased demand is likely due to developers and communities in the area competing for residents in an already competitive market.

Compared to Texas as a whole, Austin respondents cite financial and affordability issues more often as the deciding factor than school quality and crime (which does not even make the list). Affordability may likely continue to be a primary concern for buyers in the future.

THE DALLAS-FORT WORTH METROPOLITAN AREA

Everything seems to be bigger in Texas. There are few places that this could not be more true than the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. As one of the largest metropolitan areas in the United States (fourth largest behind New York, Los Angeles, and Chicago), the Metroplex has become a bastion of Texas industry, culture, and style. The area is home to a diverse agglomeration of people and businesses that attracts others from all over the United States and the world. When people move to and within this piece of urban Texas, what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section looks at the survey results from Texas REALTORS® about their last transaction to summarize the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX E: DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understand who lives in the Metroplex is important to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they do. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates over 7,000,000 people live in the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, making it one of the largest metropolitan areas in the nation. While generation X makes up a large portion of the population, the youngest cohort slightly edges over in number. Millennials are close behind with Baby boomers losing ground at 10 percent. FIGURE 21 provides a demographic snapshot of the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area included in this survey (*85,86,87,88*).

Almost one-third of the area's households makes less than $35,000 per year, which is still lower than most other urban areas studied and the state as a whole. Income in higher tiers, while not as high as the Austin metropolitan area, closely matches that of Houston.

Middle income households still make up a significant portion of the population, with the median household income around $60,000. This median is second only to Austin.

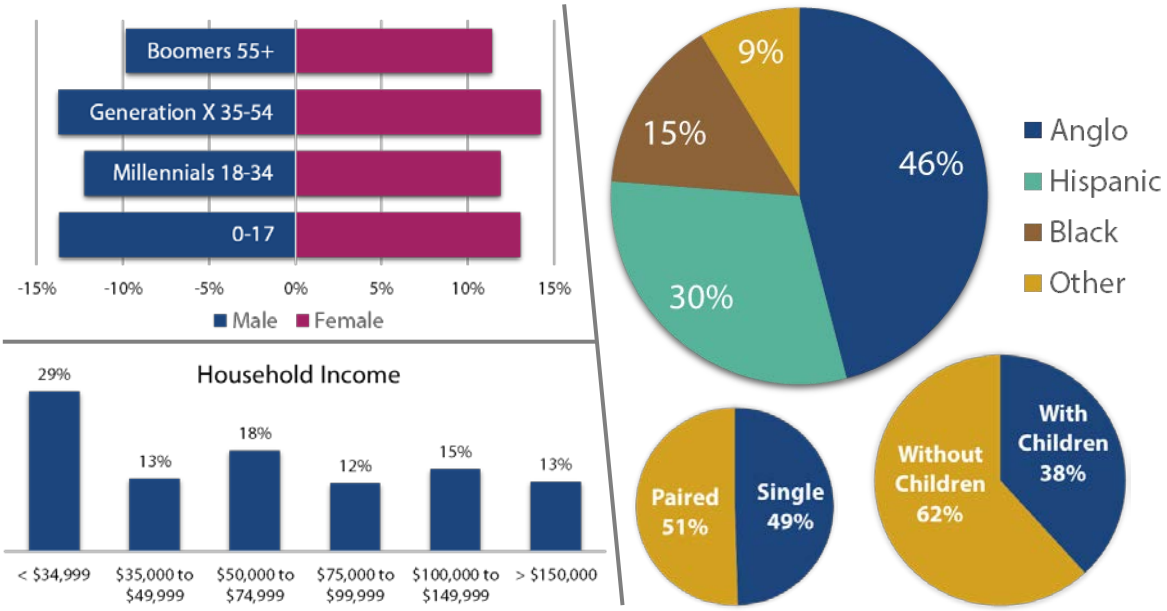

FIGURE 21 Dallas-Fort Worth Metropolitan Demographic Profile.

While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[12], knowing the racial composition of the Dallas-Fort Worth area is still important. The Metroplex has no racial majority—a more common phenomenon in recent years and likely a continuing trend. Anglos and Hispanics make up a significant portion of the population at 76 percent. However, the black population in the Metroplex is one of the largest in the state (second only to Houston) at 15 percent. The Metroplex has the highest marriage/paired rate when compared to other metropolitan areas, but is comparable to the rest of the state for households with children.

[12] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

Housing Profile

The Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area includes Dallas and Tarrant Counties and the counties surrounding them, including the areas of Denton, Arlington, Plano, and Frisco. Of the respondents surveyed, 89 percent of their last transactions were for home purchases. The remaining 11 percent either leased or rented.

Sixty-nine percent of all home sales in the survey were less than $300,000; 16 percent were greater than $400,000 (FIGURE 22). The distribution of surveyed sales prices compared to actual sales prices in the Dallas-Fort Worth area in 2015 reveals a close correlation between the two, giving validity to the local responses. Rental properties under $1,500 per month represented almost half of the rental/lease transactions. However, nearly a third was between $1,500 and $2,000; the highest rental rate bracket comprised 11 percent of the transactions.

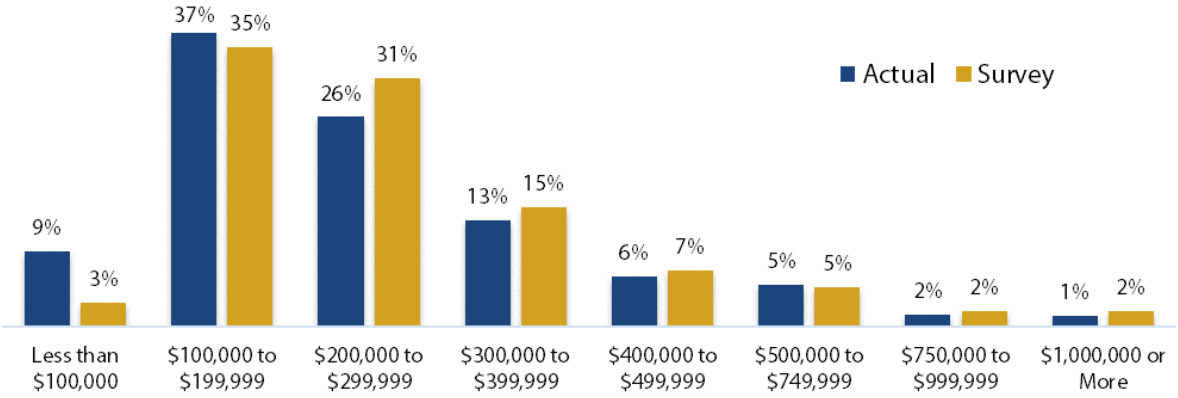

FIGURE 22 Survey Distribution of Dallas-Fort Worth Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select

demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, there were a total of 330 completed and valid responses with 76 moving from outside the region to Dallas-Fort Worth. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing the Dallas-Fort Worth Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 23 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 20. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX E: DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES.

TABLE 20 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	4.75	5.76	291.0	0.033				
School quality	2.19	4.36	226.5	0.002	2.58	4.54	353.5	0.001

DALLAS-FORT WORTH: Why Move to the Region?

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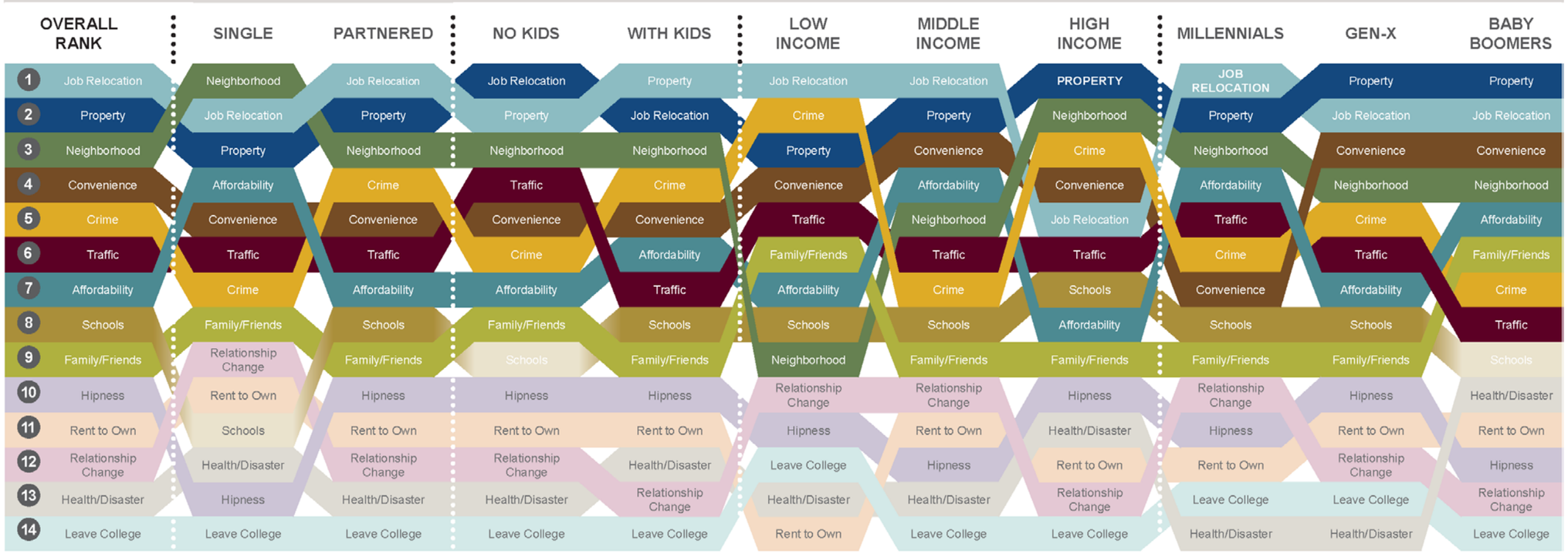

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 23 Dallas-Fort Worth: Why Move to the Region?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for income groups can be seen in TABLE 21 and TABLE 22. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences within the generational group.

TABLE 21 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	3, 72	5.38	0.002
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 72	3.61	0.017
Crime or perceived safety	3, 72	3.54	0.019

TABLE 22 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	High Income	6.48	Middle Income	5.43	0.025
			Low Income	4.50	0.022
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	Low Income	3.00	Middle Income	5.04	0.046
			High Income	5.88	0.005
Crime or perceived safety	High Income	5.84	Middle Income	4.52	0.035

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 24 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 23. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX E: DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES.

DALLAS-FORT WORTH: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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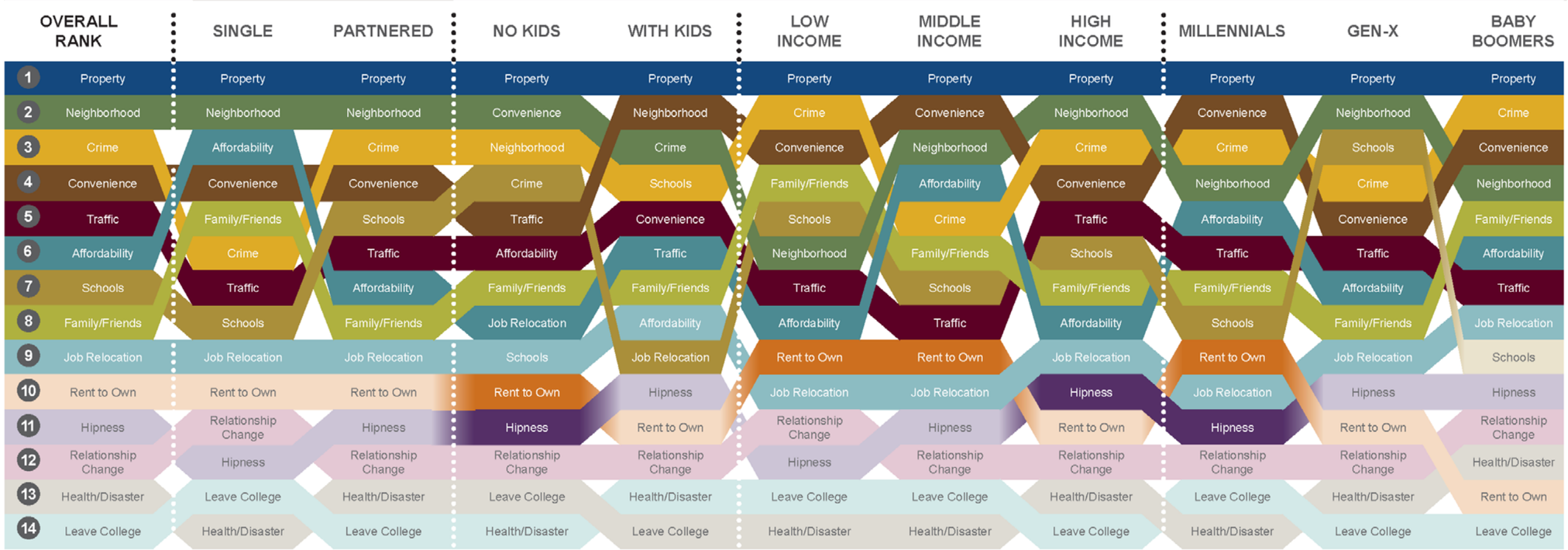

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Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 24 Dallas-Fort Worth: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

TABLE 23 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.21	5.68	6297.5	0.012				
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	4.56	5.13	6389.5	0.020				
Crime or perceived safety	4.33	5.13	6166.5	0.007				
Traffic congestion or commute distance					4.78	4.29	11010.0	0.029
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)					4.62	4.12	11131.5	0.043
School quality	3.46	4.65	5718.5	0.001	3.41	4.86	8452.0	0.000
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					3.68	3.11	11092.0	0.031
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner					3.39	2.38	9822.0	0.000
Cool factor or hipness					3.12	2.39	9961.0	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2.65	2.06	6672.5	0.032	2.64	1.91	10366.0	0.001
Attend or leave college					1.84	1.42	11237.0	0.006

Factor (continued)	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)					5.67	5.05	4173.5	0.027
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation					5.07	4.38	4153.5	0.027
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.60	2.80	1495.0	0.000				
School quality	4.44	2.20	1353.0	0.000				
Proximity to family and friends					4.38	3.54	4129.0	0.026
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	2.82	1.65	2007.0	0.020				
Cool factor or hipness	2.68	1.80	1923.0	0.015				
Attend or leave college	1.62	1.00	2220.0	0.028				

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 24 and TABLE 25. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 24 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 326	3.41	0.018
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	3, 326	3.76	0.011
Proximity to family and friends	3, 326	3.11	0.027
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	3, 326	3.22	0.023
Generational Differences			
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	2, 293	5.53	0.004
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 293	3.61	0.028
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 293	9.21	0.000
School quality	2, 293	20.13	0.000
Proximity to family and friends	2, 293	7.47	0.001
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 293	18.21	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	2, 293	7.41	0.001
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2, 293	3.87	0.022
Attend or leave college	2, 293	7.01	0.001

TABLE 25 Moving to Dallas-Fort Worth Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	Low Income	3.87	Middle Income	4.99	0.022
			High Income	5.33	0.003
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Middle Income	4.85	High Income	3.98	0.003
Proximity to family and friends	Middle Income	4.75	High Income	4.10	0.036
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Middle Income	3.26	High Income	2.29	0.004

TABLE 25 Continued

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	Millennials	5.27	Gen-X	4.56	0.001
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Millennials	4.81	Baby Boomer	3.80	0.008
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Millennials	5.13	Gen-X	4.01	0.000
			Baby Boomer	4.33	0.027
School quality	Baby Boomer	2.35	Millennials	4.63	0.000
			Gen-X	4.68	0.000
Proximity to family and friends	Gen-X	3.83	Millennials	4.78	0.001
			Baby Boomer	4.76	0.009
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	3.83	Gen-X	2.35	0.000
			Baby Boomer	1.85	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	Millennials	3.13	Gen-X	2.51	0.008
			Baby Boomer	1.96	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	Millennials	2.64	Gen-X	2.02	0.013
			Baby Boomer	1.89	0.029
Attend or leave college	Millennials	1.93	Gen-X	1.52	0.017
			Baby Boomer	1.07	0.000
	Gen-X	1.52	Baby Boomer	1.07	0.042

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 25 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 26. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX E: DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES.

DALLAS-FORT WORTH: Why Choose that House?

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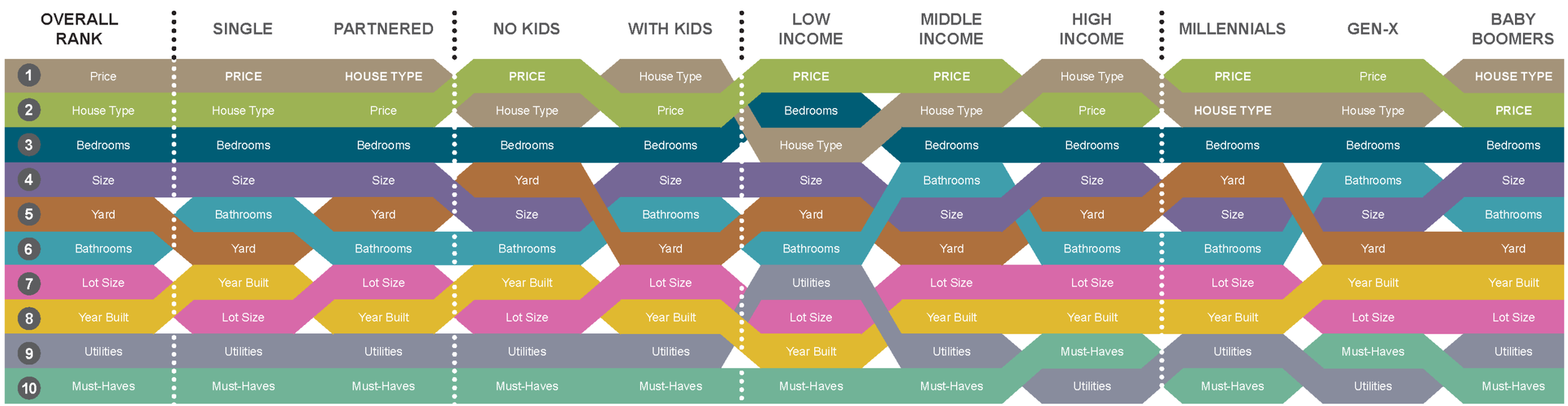

How to Read This Chart

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Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 25 Dallas-Fort Worth: Why Choose That House?

TABLE 26 Choosing a Home in Dallas-Fort Worth Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Price	6.07	5.86			6.07	5.79		
Type of house (single family detached, condo, townhouse, multifamily, etc.)	5.53	6.03	5927.5	0.001	5.88	5.87		
Number of bedrooms	5.40	5.52			5.35	5.61	11017.5	0.027
Square footage	5.01	5.29			4.98	5.29	10882.5	0.017
Presence of yard	4.79	5.27	6561.0	0.042	5.05	5.17		
Number of bathrooms	4.92	5.18			4.92	5.22	11049.0	0.030
Acreage and/or lot size	3.93	4.70	6141.5	0.006	4.41	4.54		
Year structure was built/renovated	4.25	4.55			4.48	4.41		
Cost of utilities	3.86	3.99			3.90	3.92		
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.47	3.95			3.81	3.91		

Factor (continued)	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Price	5.94	5.57		
Type of house (single family detached, condo, townhouse, multifamily, etc.)	5.98	5.24	3792.0	0.003
Number of bedrooms	5.50	5.46		
Square footage	5.18	4.92		
Presence of yard	5.25	4.08	3760.0	0.003
Number of bathrooms	5.11	4.92		
Acreage and/or lot size	4.67	2.95	2841.0	0.000
Year structure was built/renovated	4.50	3.70	4055.0	0.017
Cost of utilities	3.92	3.78		
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.92	3.38		

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 27 and TABLE 28. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 27 Choosing a Home in Dallas-Fort Worth ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Price	3, 326	2.68	0.047
Generational Differences			
Price	2, 293	3.91	0.021

TABLE 28 Choosing a Home in Dallas-Fort Worth LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Price	High Income	3.88	Low Income	6.25	0.054
			Middle Income	6.05	0.012
Generational Differences					
Price	Millennials	6.20	Gen-X	5.75	0.009
			Baby Boomer	5.72	0.040

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX E: DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Dallas-Fort Worth versus Texas

Choosing the Dallas-Fort Worth Area

What is the number-one factor causing a move to the Metroplex? Jobs. While most Texans generally indicated that something about the property they chose trumped all other factors, in the Metroplex, relocating due to a new job or career change takes the number-one spot. New residents also value the Metroplex's transportation, convenience, and schools more than in other Texans regions.

Choosing a Neighborhood

However, when area buyers choose a neighborhood, they mirror the majority of Texans, placing the highest value on the property, neighborhood reputation, crime rate, and convenience. Like the other large metropolitan regions, traffic is more important than affordability, schools, family/friends, and job relocation factors. However, North Texans pay closer attention to a neighborhood's crime rate and schools than in other metropolitan areas (with the exception of Houston for crime and Corpus Christi for schools).

Selecting the Right House

Like other areas in Texas, the home itself is the most important factor in the housing location decision. And like many of the larger metropolitan areas, price remains the most important factor. Metroplex buyers do not differ from other Texans in what they view as important factors for selecting a home, noting the home's price as the number-one factor. North Texans also value the house type (single-family detached, condominium, townhouse, multifamily, etc.), the number of bedrooms, and the square footage over other factors.

Why Move to Dallas-Fort Worth?

Respondents were asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the respondent indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area.

North Texans Overall

North Texas respondents cite a job relocation or career change as the primary reason their clients chose to move to the Metroplex. This is closely followed by some attribute about the property they chose. While it is unlikely the house is a primary reason for the move to the city, it does indicate that the house itself plays an important role in the location decision.

Elements describing the area, such as neighborhood reputation and convenience, the metropolitan area's traffic, crime rate, and affordability, are also listed as important factors in moving to the area. While school quality and nearness to family and friends do appear on the list, these do not appear to be that important in the decision process.

Singles versus Couples

Single buyers appear to weigh the quality of the Metroplex's neighborhoods—their reputation, aesthetics, etc.—as the most significant factor when deciding to move to the region. While this is likely not the primary reason to move to the region (i.e., likely moved for a job), this factor may have helped the Metroplex beat out other cities that could have been in the running. Singles are also much more sensitive to the affordability of the region. The Metroplex attracts many from outside the state, so the region may be particularly attractive as a less-expensive option.

Couples, on the other hand, are more likely to be influenced by the type of housing, the area's overall crime rate, and school quality over other factors. Neighborhood factors and affordability are less important for couples than singles.

Children versus No Children

Families with children appear to be drawn to the region more for the housing opportunities over buyers without children. For them, school quality is a factor, while it is not even considered for those without children. These families also tend to give more importance to the region's crime rate than those without children.

Buyers with no children, on the other hand, give much more importance to the region's traffic problems and slightly greater influence to being located near family and friends.

Income Considerations

Middle- and low-income households are more likely to move to the region due to a job change, while high-income buyers tend to rank many Metroplex attributes more important (including the neighborhood quality, crime, and convenience). Most of all, they place an extremely high importance on the house.

Low-income buyers are more sensitive to the region's crime rate and traffic, giving these a higher importance ranking than the other income groups. They place a very low importance on the neighborhood quality (reputation, aesthetics, and amenities), likely because their job and property choices are more limited.

Middle-income buyers make purchase decisions with low emphasis on differences in crime levels but place a much higher importance on the affordability of the region compared to the other income groups.

Generational Divides

The three generations have property and job relocation decisions at the top of their choice set for a move to the Metroplex. Neighborhood factors are also rated highly across the groups. Millennials are much less concerned about the convenience of their home decision and more about traffic issues than the other generations.

Crime and affordability issues vary across the three generation rankings, with millennials and baby boomers caring more about affordability and generation X caring more about crime. Generation X and millennials rank school issues as important, while baby boomers do not.

Millennials' attraction to the region because of a job, the area's affordability, and traffic likely reflect their relative newness to the employment community.

Additional Findings

There are no significant differences between renters and owners or between employed and underemployed populations.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within the Dallas-Fort Worth area. This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

North Texans Overall

Overall, the property (and its attributes) far surpasses the other factors in choosing a home location. This likely indicates a general willingness by North Texans to pick the house they want regardless of other factors surrounding them.

A second tier of factors all closely ranked together includes attributes about the neighborhood (its reputation, crime rate, and convenience). The disparity between property and neighborhood attributes could reveal a wide selection of similar neighborhoods for all types of buyers; many are similar, so the choice is more about the house and its convenience to them than the neighborhood itself. Traffic concerns rank ahead of affordability, schools, and nearness to family and friends in neighborhood choices among the lower significance factors.

Singles versus Couples

While the property itself and neighborhood reputation rank the same for both groups, couples place a significantly higher importance on these two than singles. Couples also rank aspects such as school quality, crime, and traffic as more important.

Singles, on the other hand, tend to place a much higher importance on the affordability of a neighborhood and nearness to friends and family than couples. Singles are also more

likely to be experiencing a change in relationship status or establishing their own household.

Children versus No Children

Buyers with children make decisions similarly to couples in their search for a home location. Families with children, not surprisingly, place a much higher importance on the neighborhood schools than those without children.

Buyers without children rank convenience over other neighborhood quality factors and place a significantly higher importance on traffic concerns and affordability—ahead of nearness to family and friends. These buyers are also much more likely to evaluate how hip the neighborhood is.

Income Considerations

Property is the most important consideration across all income categories, with the affordability of the area mattering much more to middle-income buyers than to low- or high-income buyers. This includes things such as taxes, home price, utilities, and overall cost of living. They also place a higher importance on being convenient than other groups.

Low-income buyers instead are extremely sensitive to the crime rate in the neighborhood, likely because affordable areas for this group have higher crime rates. This corresponds with their significantly low importance given to neighborhood aesthetics and traffic. Low-income households also find that nearness to family and friends and quality schools are paramount to a good location. This likely indicates the need to rely on these institutions for support and child care.

For high-income buyers, area affordability and nearness to family and friends are much lower considerations in the location decision. Instead, high-order luxuries such as traffic, neighborhood amenities, and the neighborhood’s hipness are all important factors.

Generational Divides

Though not necessarily reflected in the rankings, millennials differ quite a bit from other generations in the Metroplex, rating many factors much more importantly than other generations. Millennials rate things such as affordability, the hipness of the neighborhood, and transitioning from renting to owning significantly higher than both other age groups. They also rate traffic and short commutes higher than baby boomers, and the crime rate and convenience of a neighborhood higher than generation X.

Generation X gives substantially high importance to the quality of schools in an area and much lower consideration to living near friends and family. Baby boomers, on the other hand, place a much higher value on living near family and friends and the overall crime rate of the area.

For millennials, most of these factors are much more important to them than to the other two groups, potentially indicating a higher sensitivity to neighborhood differences than other generations.

Additional Findings

North Texas respondents reported that clients who are purchasing a home desire to be closer to family and friends significantly more than those who rent.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house made North Texans weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

North Texans Overall

When looking at the property, the price of the home and type of home roughly tie for first place (price barely beating out type). This could indicate that both of these factors are independent of one another and yet are still primary decision factors. The number of

bedrooms follows in importance, with attributes about the size, presence of a yard, and number of bathrooms staggering behind.

This ranking exactly follows the preferences of all Texans. Also, while there are few dramatic movements, there are still several significant differences in importance.

Singles versus Couples

While the differences in ranking between singles and couples are subtle, there is a stark difference in the top factor for choosing a home: singles focus on price, and couples focus on the type of house. Both of these respective factors could be considered the primary decision point for their groups.

Aside from the type of house, couples place a significantly higher importance on the presence of a yard and size of the lot. This, paired with their top consideration, indicates a heavy preference by couples toward single-family detached housing in the Metroplex.

Children versus No Children

The similarities between families with children versus those without and singles versus couples is striking. While the type of house is less important to those with children, it still comes in as the most important factor. In this case, however, families with children look more at the number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, and overall square footage than those without children. This likely reflects their need to accommodate their family over other luxuries.

Buyers without children, however, are able to place a higher importance on luxuries such as the presence (or absence) of a yard and the year the house was built or remodeled.

Income Considerations

For both low- and middle-income buyers, price is by far the most decisive factor in their property decision. In both cases, no other attribute comes close.

Low-income buyers are also more sensitive to whether or not their house meets their needs, giving a higher importance to the number of bedrooms and bathrooms over size factors or the year built. Must-have upgrades are not at all important in their decision.

High-income buyers are able to consider more luxuries, especially things such as must-have upgrades and the square footage of the house.

Generational Divides

While the generations may look different, there are not many differences between them. While baby boomers hold the type of property as the primary decision maker and generation X uses price as the top factor, millennials actually are sensitive to both (though not equally—price ranks extremely high for this group).

Similarly, millennials are also more sensitive to the cost of utilities over older generations. Millennials are willing to sacrifice must-have upgrades, the number of bathrooms, and the age of the property for things such as a yard and square footage. This could indicate that more millennials are trying to get into older starter homes (and make sacrifices to get there) than other generations. This could also indicate that millennials are also more willing to live in suburban areas (the American Dream) than popular opinion suggests.

Additional Findings

Those buyers who were looking to purchase rather than rent place a significantly higher importance on the type of house, presence of a yard, and lot size over those renting. This could also indicate a push toward realizing the American Dream.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 31 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

North Texas respondents cite something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 26). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer.

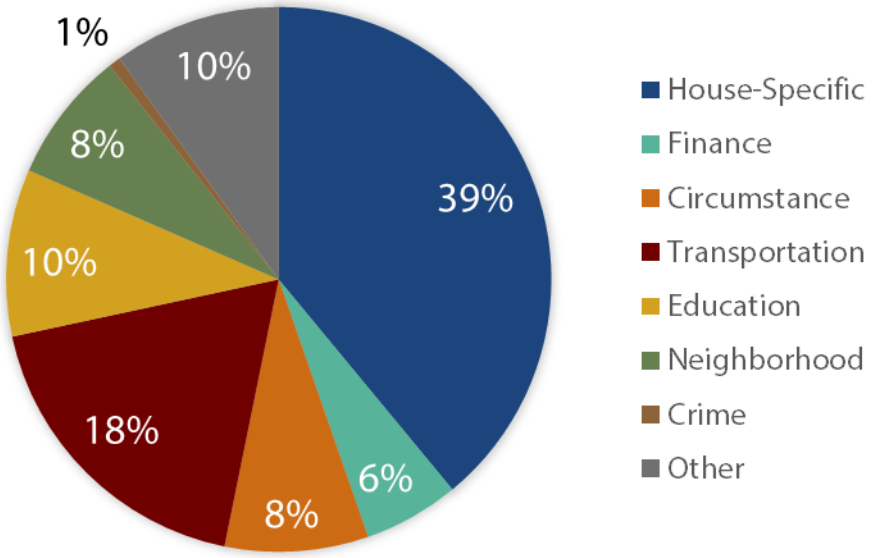

FIGURE 26 Open Responses Given for Dallas-Fort Worth.

Transportation concerns contribute almost another fifth of those other reasons. Respondents say many of their clients want to be close to work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. In the Why Choose That Neighborhood? section, these responses represent a balanced mixture of convenience, family and friends, and traffic. In many cases, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, its convenience, and ultimately the

property itself. The one exception to this can be found in millennials, who view traffic and travel times as extremely important to their location decision. Access to public transit or walkable and bikeable communities appears frequently in these comments.

Compared to Texas as a whole, respondents note that life circumstances play an above-average role in the housing location decision. These include things such as becoming a homeowner, having a death in the family, lacking other options, and becoming empty nesters.

THE HOUSTON METROPOLITAN AREA

Set to become the nation's third largest city in the coming years (surpassing Chicago), Houston has continued to attract new residents. Though dominated in the past by the oil and gas industry, economic diversification has allowed Houston to weather recent economic events and has not deterred people's outlook on jobs or the future of the city. Low taxes, a diverse mix of housing options and styles, and continued job prospects have continued to attract new residents year after year. When people move to and within Texas' largest city, what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section looks at the survey results from Houston's REALTORS® about their last transaction to summarize the most important factors their clients consider when deciding where to live. More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX F: HOUSTON DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understanding who lives in Houston is important to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they do within the area. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates an approximate 6,600,000 people live in the Houston metropolitan area—an area still steadily growing. According to Rice University's Kinder Institute (*89*), Houston will surpass Chicago as the third largest city in the U.S. by 2030. Houston's generational distribution is nearly identical to that of the Dallas-Fort Worth area, with generation X and the youngest generation making up the highest percentage of the population. However, millennials are more closely matched and Houston caters to more baby boomers than Dallas or Austin. FIGURE 27 provides a demographic snapshot of the Austin metropolitan area included in this survey (*85,86,87,88*).

Houston's income distribution is also nearly identical to the Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area. Almost one-third of the area's households makes less than $35,000 per year, which is still lower than most other urban areas studied and the state as a whole. Income in higher tiers, while not as high as the Austin metropolitan area, closely matches that of Dallas-Fort Worth. Middle income households still make up a significant portion of the population, with the median household income around $60,000—also almost identical to Dallas-Fort Worth but short of Austin.

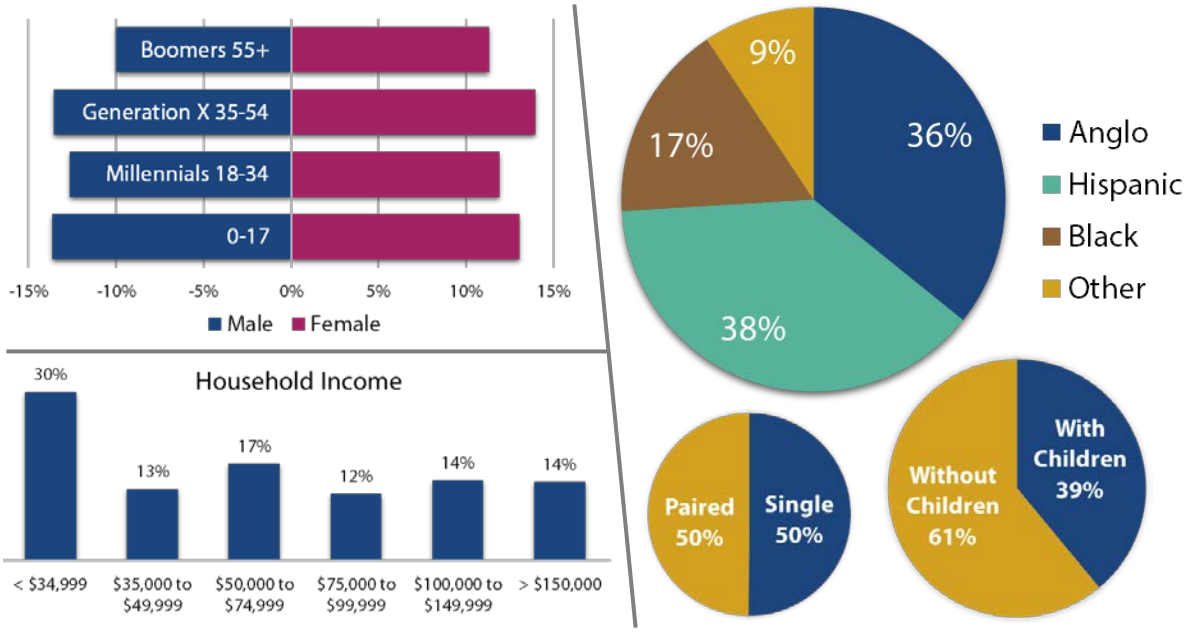

FIGURE 27 Houston Metropolitan Demographic Profile.

Where Houston most notably stands out is in the metropolitan area's racial and ethnic diversity. Houston not only does not have a single racial majority, but Anglos are also not the largest proportion of the population. In Houston, Hispanics edge over Anglos by two percent at 38 percent. Also noteworthy is that Houston has significantly larger black and other racial populations than other urban areas in Texas and the country. According to a report from Rice's Kinder Institute (*90*), the racial make-up of Houston's three primary counties—Harris, Fort Bend, and Montgomery—has become more evenly

distributed over the last 30 years. Fort Bend is now notably one of those most even diverse counties in the U.S. This same report also importantly notes that while Houston's diversity is rare for the U.S., its growth and diversity reflect national trends. What Houston looks like now is likely how much of the nation will look in the coming decades. While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[13], knowing the racial composition of the Houston area is still important, especially to understanding potential trends in housing location choice in other U.S. urban areas.

People in the Houston metropolitan area are split down the middle at 50 percent each as to whether they should be single or coupled. This generally reflects the state as a whole. Houston also matches closely with the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex in how many households have children— also comparable to the rest of the state.

Housing Profile

The Houston metropolitan area includes Harris County and the surrounding counties. Of those surveyed, respondents reported 85 percent of their last transactions were for clients purchasing a home. The remaining 15 percent either leased or rented.

Sixty percent of all home sales in the survey were less than $300,000; 25 percent were greater than $400,000 (FIGURE 28). The distribution of surveyed sales prices compared to actual sales prices in the Houston area in 2015 reveals a relatively close correlation between the two, slightly under sampling lower-priced homes. However, this difference does not significantly detract from the validity of the sample. Rental properties under $1,500 per month represented just over one-third of rental/lease transactions. However, nearly 65 percent were over $1,500, with 18 percent over $2,500 per month. This represented the highest rental rates for any metropolitan region.

[13] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

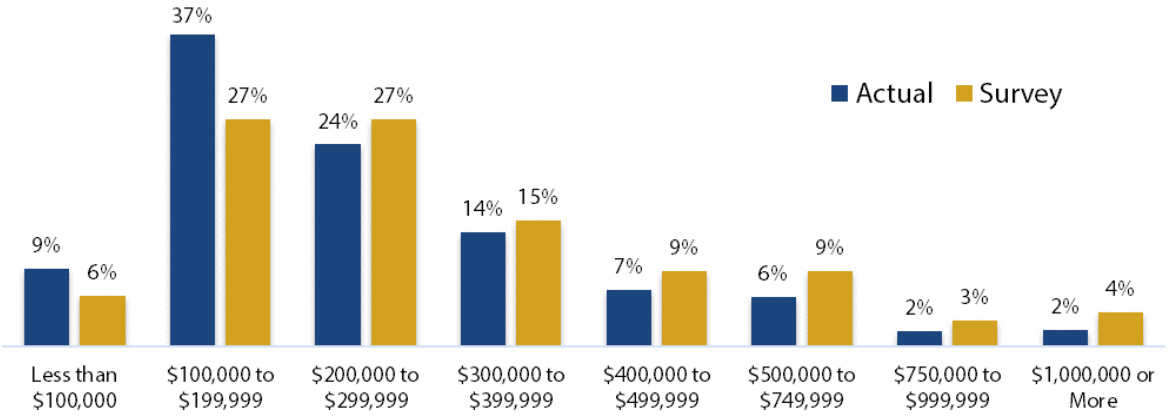

FIGURE 28 Survey Distribution of Houston Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In the Houston metropolitan area, there were a total of 344 completed and valid responses with 79 moving from outside the region to Houston. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing the Houston Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 29 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 29. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX F: HOUSTON DATA TABLES.

TABLE 29 Moving to Houston Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.29	1.90	289.5	0.013	3.13	1.69	383.5	0.003
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)					4.52	3.33	403.5	0.020
Proximity to family and friends	3.37	5.80	76.5	0.026	3.93	2.57	405.0	0.020

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for income groups and generational groups can be seen in TABLE 30 and TABLE 31. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 30 Moving to Houston ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	3, 75	4.73	0.004
Generational Differences			
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 76	4.87	0.010
School quality	2, 76	7.57	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 76	3.67	0.030
Attend or leave college	2, 76	3.69	0.030

HOUSTON: Why Move to the Region?

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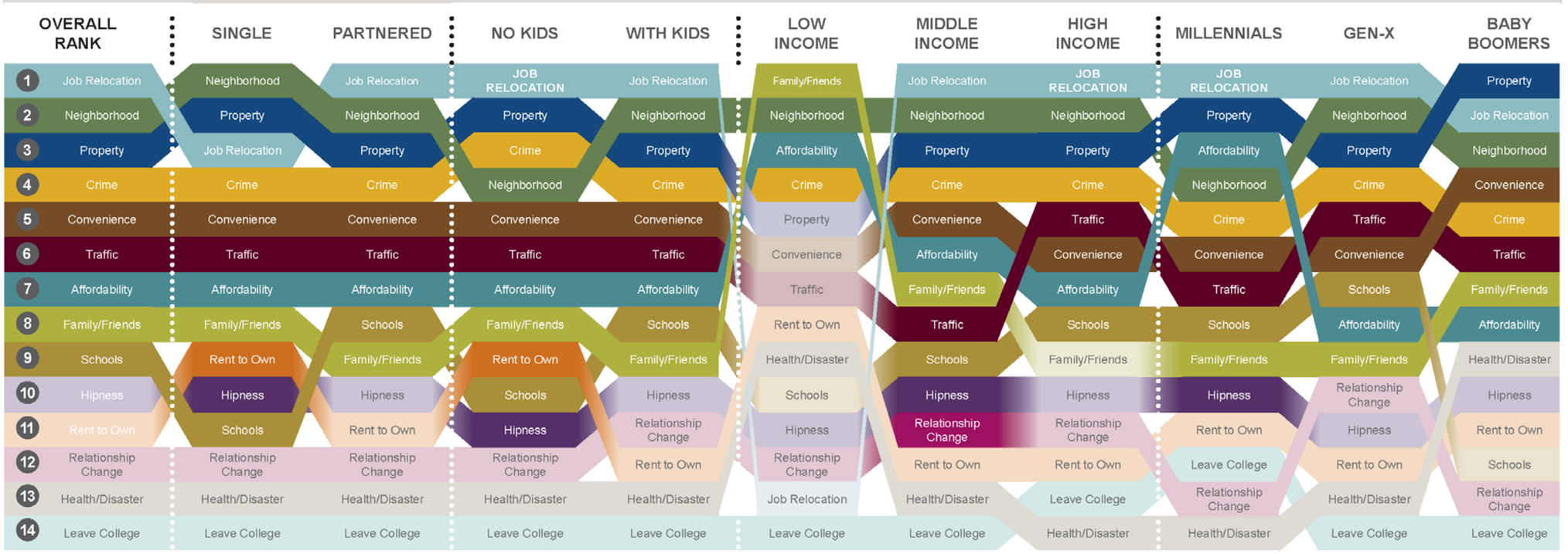

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 29 Houston: Why Move to the Region?

TABLE 31 Moving to Houston LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	Low Income	1.00	Middle Income	5.67	0.001
			High Income	6.00	0.000
Generational Differences					
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Millennials	5.47	Gen-X	3.74	0.003
			Baby Boomer	3.93	0.032
School quality	Baby Boomer	1.40	Millennials	4.42	0.000
			Gen-X	3.84	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.67	Millennials	1.53	0.021
			Gen-X	1.60	0.013
Attend or leave college	Millennials	2.32	Gen-X	1.47	0.022
			Baby Boomer	1.20	0.017

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 30 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 32. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX F: HOUSTON DATA TABLES.

TABLE 32 Moving to a Houston Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	4.74	4.14	8018.0	0.018				
School quality	3.14	4.21	7285.5	0.001	3.32	4.47	9758.0	0.000
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.59	2.77	7855.5	0.005	3.42	2.65	10962.0	0.002
Cool factor or hipness					3.47	2.63	10019.5	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3.47	2.40	7457.0	0.000				

TABLE 32 Continued

Factor (continued)	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.98	4.28	3584.5	0.046				
Proximity to family and friends	4.23	5.09	3426.5	0.021	4.52	3.31	5357.5	0.001
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)					4.39	3.44	5410.5	0.001
School quality	4.04	2.56	2951.0	0.001				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					3.49	4.50	5881.0	0.009
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	3.11	1.97	3430.0	0.013	3.12	2.15	5944.5	0.008

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 33 and TABLE 34. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 33 Moving to a Houston Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Proximity to family and friends	3, 340	3.10	0.027
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	3, 340	6.41	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	3, 340	4.41	0.005
Generational Differences			
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	2, 311	3.42	0.034
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 311	3.08	0.047
Proximity to family and friends	2, 311	3.11	0.046
School quality	2, 311	17.41	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 311	6.55	0.002
Cool factor or hipness	2, 311	3.35	0.036
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2, 311	4.26	0.015
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 311	6.35	0.002
Attend or leave college	2, 311	6.16	0.002

HOUSTON: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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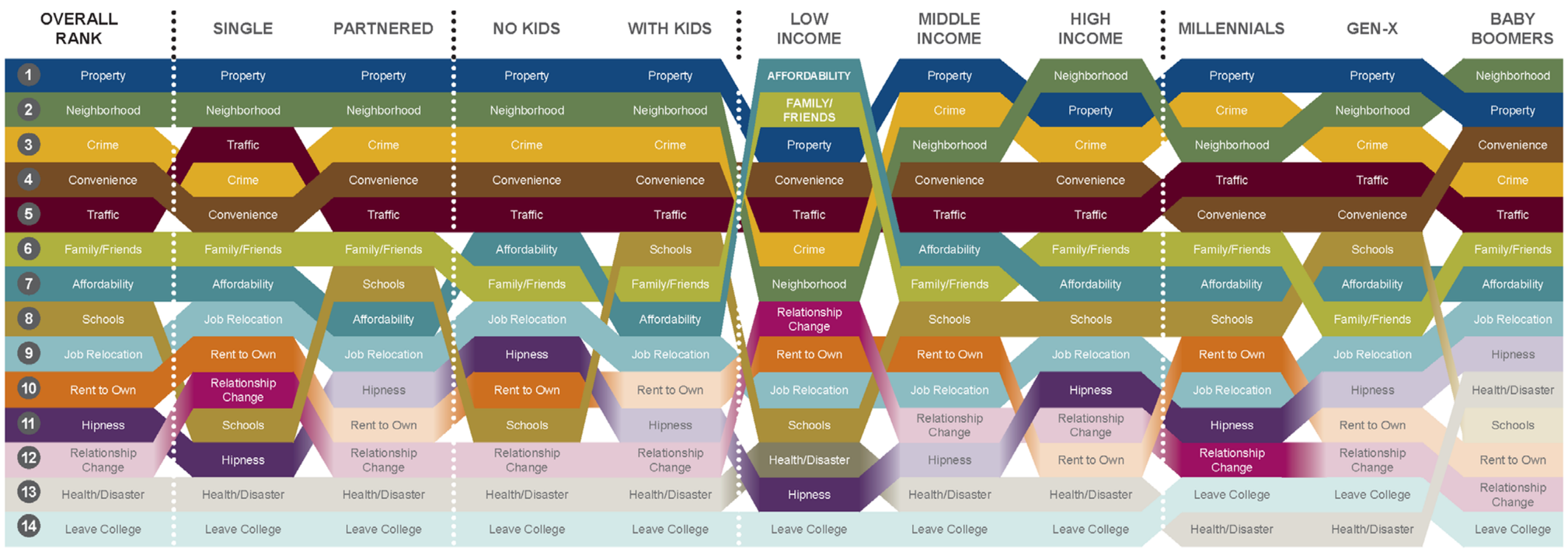

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Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 30 Houston: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

TABLE 34 Moving to a Houston Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Proximity to family and friends	Low Income	6.11	Middle Income	4.45	0.021
			High Income	4.06	0.004
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Low Income	6.22	Middle Income	4.61	0.018
			High Income	3.80	0.000
	Middle Income	0.002	High Income	3.80	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Middle Income	3.59	High Income	2.69	0.004
Generational Differences					
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	Gen-X	4.72	Millennials	5.20	0.031
			Baby Boomer	5.24	0.031
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Millennials	5.22	Baby Boomer	4.47	0.014
Proximity to family and friends	Millennials	4.71	Gen-X	4.03	0.015
School quality	Baby Boomer	2.54	Millennials	4.07	0.000
			Gen-X	4.50	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	3.67	Gen-X	2.84	0.008
			Baby Boomer	2.42	0.001
Cool factor or hipness	Millennials	3.36	Gen-X	2.84	0.035
			Baby Boomer	2.68	0.019
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	Millennials	3.19	Baby Boomer	2.21	0.004
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.59	Millennials	1.95	0.010
			Gen-X	1.78	0.001
Attend or leave college	Millennials	2.27	Gen-X	1.81	0.025
			Baby Boomer	1.45	0.001

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 31 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 35. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX F: HOUSTON DATA TABLES.

HOUSTON: Why Choose that House?

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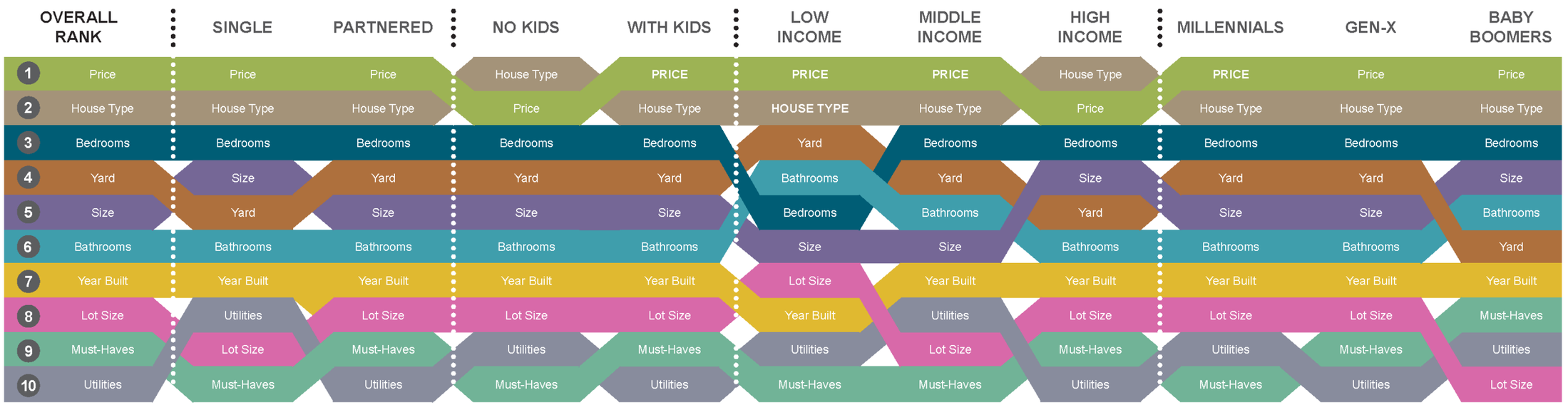

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 31 Houston: Why Choose That House?

TABLE 35 Choosing a Home in Houston Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Price					5.63	5.99	11098.5	0.006
Number of bedrooms					5.07	5.57	9801.0	0.000
Square footage					4.89	5.24	11376.5	0.018
Number of bathrooms					4.86	5.09	11396.0	0.020
Acreage and/or lot size	3.93	4.43	8193.0	0.034	3.99	4.48	11356.0	0.019
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.71	4.20	8123.0	0.026	3.71	4.17	11616.0	0.041
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Price					5.91	5.40	5889.0	0.008
Type of house (single family detached, condo, townhouse, multifamily, etc.)					5.92	5.19	5570.0	0.002
Presence of yard	5.22	4.47	3494.5	0.028	5.22	4.60	6029.0	0.018
Square footage					5.19	4.67	6228.0	0.039
Year structure was built/renovated					4.64	3.63	5299.0	0.000
Acreage and/or lot size					4.48	3.08	4382.0	0.000

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 36 and TABLE 37. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 36 Choosing a Home in Houston ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Cost of utilities	3, 340	3.60	0.014
Generational Differences			
Presence of yard	2, 311	5.44	0.005
Acreage and/or lot size	2, 311	3.07	0.048

TABLE 37 Choosing a Home in Houston LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Cost of utilities	Middle Income	4.25	High Income	3.59	0.003
Generational Differences					
Presence of yard	Baby Boomer	4.59	Millennials	5.36	0.003
			Gen-X	5.29	0.004
Acreage and/or lot size	Gen-X	4.50	Baby Boomer	3.82	0.014

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX F: HOUSTON DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Houston versus Texas

Choosing the Houston Area

In Houston, regional home purchase/rent choices are not determined by property characteristics as much as in the rest of Texas; neighborhood charm and amenities are more determinative. Job relocation is the number-one reason new residents move to the city, reflecting the growing and diversifying economy. Neighborhood aspects bump

property factors down to third place. Houston is the only Texas city where these priorities are found.

Choosing a Neighborhood

When choosing a neighborhood, Houstonians' priorities match those of other Texans fairly well. At this scale, finding the right home and finding the right neighborhood are the two most important factors. However, Houstonians are more sensitive to crime (like Dallas-Fort Worth residents) than those in other regions of Texas. Additionally, they prioritize nearness to friends and family over affordability (likely due to Houston's geographic size). Houston and Austin are the only Texas cities to view the hipness of a neighborhood as an important factor.

Selecting the Right House

While many Texans value the size of the house, Houstonians value having (or not having) a yard as more important. They are also similar to Austinites in that they value lot size (big or small) and must-have upgrades significantly more than other Texans.

Why Move to Houston?

Respondents were asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the Houston metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area.

Houstonians Overall

The most important factor cited by Houston respondents for attracting people to the city is jobs. This is not surprising since the city continues to grow, even after the downturn in oil prices in 2014. Houston's neighborhoods are the next most important factor, likely indicating a diverse collection of desirable options. However, the property factors do not fall far behind the quality of the neighborhood. Houston has diverse types and styles of neighborhoods.

Singles versus Couples

Singles and couples view Houston's neighborhoods as very important when looking for a home, ranking them ahead of the property itself. This is especially important for singles because this was ranked the number-one factor, with couples ranking job relocation first and neighborhood reputation second.

Singles and couples ranked their other reasons for moving to the city very similarly. However, singles do rate the transition from renting to owning significantly higher than couples. While school quality is important when considering the region for both, singles pay much less attention to it. However, while couples do not consider the city's hipness at all, it does play a role for singles.

Children versus No Children

Families with children ranked the factors important in choosing the Houston area identically to couples (with one exception, transitioning from renting to owning, but this is overall not an important factor).

As with those with children, buyers without children are heavily influenced to move to the region because of a new job. And while others value the quality of the neighborhood, buyers without children are more focused on the region's housing options and crime rate. These buyers are similar to singles in that they are more likely to be transitioning from renting to owning and view the region's hipness as a deciding factor.

Income Considerations

Most strikingly, there are very few factors that are significantly important for low-income buyers when choosing to live in Houston. Most strikingly, low-income families are most concerned about nearness to family and friends. Neighborhood quality and reputation as well as Houston's overall cost of living are next in importance. Concern about crime is the only other significant factor in low-income movers. This group is much less likely to move to the city due to a job change, in contrast to other income groups, but instead moves for health reasons or being displaced by a disaster.

Middle- and high-income buyers move to Houston for similar reasons: job relocation, neighborhood quality and reputation, and crime or convenience concerns. Middle-income buyers are much less sensitive to traffic congestion or commute times than high-income buyers in choosing the city (though traffic becomes a more important issue when choosing a neighborhood).

Generational Divides

Job relocation and career changes dominate the top spots across all generations, followed closely by neighborhood and property factors. Traffic concerns are most important to generation X and baby boomers, though they fall short of other neighborhood qualities.

Millennials value Houston's affordability significantly more than baby boomers and generation X, ranking it third (winning out over neighborhood reputation and aesthetics, which usually score very highly in Houston). Other generations rank affordability at the bottom of their list, *indicating that Houston's relatively affordable housing market is a strong attractor for millennials.*

In each case, school quality ranks below traffic (and is not even a factor for baby boomers). Baby boomers, instead, are more likely to be attracted to the region to be near friends and family and for the convenience the city offers. Millennials are also the only generation to view the city's hipness as an important factor for moving there.

Additional Findings

People who are looking to buy rather than rent are significantly more sensitive to Houston's overall cost of living and affordability and are more likely than renters to move to the region in order to be close to family and friends.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within the Houston area. This question was asked

of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

Houstonians Overall

While new residents to Houston are heavily attracted by the region's job market and diverse set of neighborhoods, when buyers actually choose a neighborhood, the property itself wins out. However, other neighborhood factors such as reputation, amenities, area crime, convenience, and traffic all play extremely important roles in selecting a neighborhood. Afterwards, other factors may play a role in deciding in which neighborhood to locate but not a very big one. Traffic concerns are notable here because they rank ahead of other, normally more important factors such as proximity to family and friends, affordability, and schools.

Like Austin, Houston is the only other metropolitan area where residents consider the hipness of an area in selecting their neighborhood. Houston also has a high share for buyers transitioning from renting to owning—a trait found only in Austin and rural parts of the state.

The top five factors affecting the neighborhood location choice are similar across all demographic groups. This stability shows that these factors (especially crime, convenience of services, and transportation) are important to all groups of people.

Singles versus Couples

Singles in Houston rank traffic concerns (congestion and commute times) over any other neighborhood factor (third after the property itself and the neighborhood's reputation and amenities). This likely points toward transportation issues heavily impacting their daily lives. Singles also note a higher sensitivity to an area's cost of living, a change in relationship status, or transitioning from renting to owning. Singles also value how hip their neighborhood is, though not above other traditional factors.

Couples, not surprisingly, more highly value the quality of the local schools than singles, indicating they may already have children or soon want them and are planning for the future.

Children versus No Children

Buyers both with and without children make location decisions very similarly, both ranking and scoring the top five primary factors almost identically. However, families with children value locations near quality schools in Houston significantly more than those buyers without children, who instead look at a neighborhood's affordability.

For buyers without children, school quality still factors as a consideration but not very highly. This could indicate an eye to future children or an association of quality schools with a better neighborhood environment. These buyers also place the highest importance of any group on the hipness of the neighborhood.

Income Considerations

Low-income buyers have a much different set of priorities than any other group in Houston. Affordability and nearness to family and friends are paramount in finding a neighborhood that works. Being close to family and friends ranks much higher for low-income groups than for middle- and high-income buyers, likely as a support system. Property factors are important (ranking third), but that is the lowest it ranked among all demographic groups. Convenience and transportation play the next most important role, ranking the same as the other income tiers, but are rated far more important. Low-income buyers are also more sensitive to life circumstances over other income tiers, citing relationship changes, transitioning from renting to owning, and health or disaster displacement as important location factors.

Middle- and high-income buyers place more importance on attributes of the property itself, neighborhood reputation and aesthetics, and the crime rate of the area, followed similarly by convenience and traffic concerns. Middle-income buyers also place significantly more importance on affordability than high-income buyers.

High-income buyers appear to have the luxury to be choosier when selecting a neighborhood location: they place the neighborhood's reputation, aesthetics, and amenities highest as well as consider the hipness of the neighborhood, similar to low-income buyers. High-income buyers are also significantly less likely to be transitioning from renting to owning.

Generational Divides

Nowhere are these factors more different than between generations. Neighborhood reputation and aesthetics increase in importance, and crime decreases in importance as buyers age. Attributes of the property vie for the top spot across generations. Traffic concerns, which have generally been important in Houston, rank even higher for millennials and generation X, above factors such as affordability, school quality, and nearness to family and friends.

Baby boomers are much more likely to weigh the reputation, amenities, and convenience than younger generations. They care significantly less about traffic concerns than millennials do and generally do not consider school quality factors at all.

Millennials and generation X, on the other hand, rate finding the right house much higher (top of the ranking), giving less importance to a neighborhood's reputation and crime levels. Millennials generally have a larger choice set, considering many more factors than other generations in their location decision, including the hipness of a neighborhood, whether or not they should own versus renting, and other relationship or life changes.

Generation X instead pays far more attention to the quality of the local schools (likely because they have children in school) and rate nearness to family and friends a significantly lower priority.

Additional Findings

For those buying a home, affordability and nearness to family and friends are much more important than for those renting in the Houston area, perhaps indicating that the longer-term nature of buying a home is accompanied by interest in nearness to family and friends; shorter-term renters may be more willing to compromise on that aspect.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house made Houstonians weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

Houstonians Overall

Houstonians weigh the price and type of house (single-family detached, townhouse, condominium, multifamily, etc.) equally important as the top consideration, similar to other regions. They look for the right type of home at the right price. However, after considering factors such as the number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, square footage, and presence (or absence) of a yard, most other factors drop off in importance. While all factors are important, things such as must-have upgrades, lot size, and the year the property was built do not play a large role in the decision-making process.

Singles versus Couples

Singles and couples look for homes in very similar ways, looking first at price, the type of home, and the number of bedrooms. For singles, however, choosing a specific house is more about the cost of ownership than anything else. Singles rank price as the top consideration when choosing a house and rank the cost of utilities higher than couples.

For couples, having a large lot with a yard is much more important (signaling a preference among couples for suburban-style homes). Couples also place a significantly higher importance on any must-have upgrades that may be on their checklist.

Children versus No Children

The selection process for those with children is nearly identical to couples: the overall ranking is the same, and the importance scores are very similar. Like couples, families with children value the number of bedrooms, number of bathrooms, a yard, and upgrades. This displays a pattern of looking for homes that meet basic needs over luxury items.

For those buyers without children, the type of property is more important, likely indicating a preference for multiple types of housing. Again, while the rankings between the two groups are similar, those with children place a higher importance on all other factors except the cost of utilities. These lower scores also reveal a relative flexibility in housing choice, likely giving those with no children a more diverse set of options.

Income Considerations

Low- and middle-income buyers rank price much higher than high-income buyers. In fact, for both groups, this is the defining attribute when choosing a house. For low-income buyers, the type of house also plays a nearly equal importance as price—far higher than other income tiers. Low-income buyers are also much more apt to purchase a property with a yard (ranking yard and lot size higher than others). This bumps the importance of the number of bedrooms lower on the scale, dropping even below the number of bathrooms.

Middle-income buyers, while also giving importance to the presence of a yard, are also sensitive to the cost of living, ranking the cost of utilities significantly higher than high-income buyers (though low-income buyers rate this much higher).

High-income buyers focus more on luxury elements of the home, including things such as the square footage, must-have upgrades, and house type over cost-of-living factors such as price and cost of utilities.

As income rises, the importance of a yard and the number of bathrooms decreases, while the year the home was built and the importance of other must-have upgrades increase.

Generational Divides

All three generations agree on their top priorities—price, house type, and the number of bedrooms. Generation X and millennials look more for homes with larger lot sizes and yards. They will likely fill in the housing stock that baby boomers left for more maintainable housing as they begin raising a family. Millennials, while mirroring generation X, are more sensitive to cost-of-living concerns.

Baby boomers care more about square footage and must-have upgrades and less about yard and lot size than generation X or millennials. This likely points to a desire to downsize into a smaller but nicer home that is easier to maintain as they near retirement.

Additional Findings

Houston respondents noted that for clients buying a home, luxuries such as must-have upgrades, overall square footage, and the year built are more important than for those renting.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may trump everything else or factor greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 27 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

Houston respondents cited something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 32). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer. Houston

has the largest share of house-specific reasons, tying with rural areas of Texas (where buyers presumably have greater control over home customization).

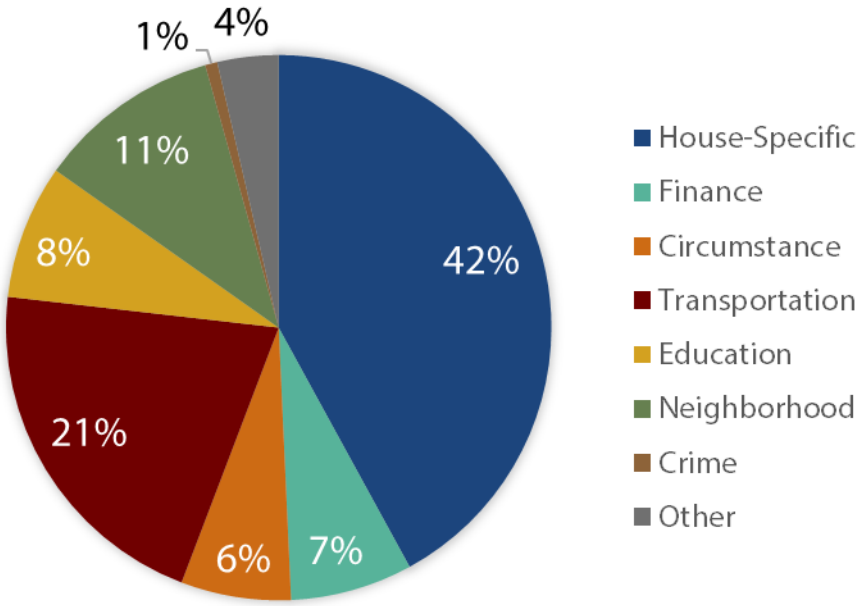

FIGURE 32 Open Responses Given for Houston.

Transportation concerns contribute another fifth of those other reasons. Respondents said many of their clients want to be close to work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. If these factors were mapped to elements in the earlier neighborhood section, these responses would represent a mixture of convenience, family and friends, and traffic. In many cases, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, its convenience, and ultimately the property itself. Traffic and transportation issues have continually been a point of concern for Houstonians. This survey reveals that is it most important to singles, low-income households, and millennials.

Access to public transit or walkable and bikeable communities appears frequently in the other factor comments—second only to Austin among urban areas. This increased demand is likely due to developers and communities in the area competing for residents by using these amenities as a selling point.

Neighborhood-specific comments were mentioned more than in any other area in Texas. This again might point toward a vibrant and diverse mix of neighborhood types that appeal to a broad spectrum of buyers.

THE SAN ANTONIO METROPOLITAN AREA

While the seventh largest city in the United States, San Antonio is arguably one of the most affordable. The metropolitan area serves a broad community of families, military personnel, and tourists and acts as a hub for telecommunications and logistics between the United States and Mexico. With a continued military commitment and growing diverse industries, the metropolitan area has continued to grow, even during the shale oil decline. As this community grows, why do people choose this region? And once in the area, what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section looks at the survey results from Texas REALTORS® about their last transaction to summarize the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, or APPENDIX G: SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understanding who lives in San Antonio is important to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they do. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates approximately 2,400,000 people live in the San Antonio metropolitan area—slightly larger than Austin. In San Antonio, each generation cohort is split roughly evenly with among the others. This differs from some of the larger metropolitan regions that have seen a declined in baby boomers and a significant increase in the youngest generation. Here, millennials also hold their own where in other areas, they make up a slightly smaller portion of the population. FIGURE 33 provides a demographic snapshot of the Austin metropolitan area included in this survey (*85,86,87,88*).

San Antonio's distribution of income differs significantly from other large metropolitan areas in Texas, more closely resembling Corpus Christi and the state as a whole. A significant percentage of the area's households makes less than $35,000 per year.

Additionally, San Antonio is home to more households in middle-income tiers than any other area studied in this survey or the state as a whole. There are significantly fewer high-income households, second only to the Corpus Christi area. The median income in San Antonio is significantly lower than other areas as well at approximately $53,000—almost identical to the state's median income.

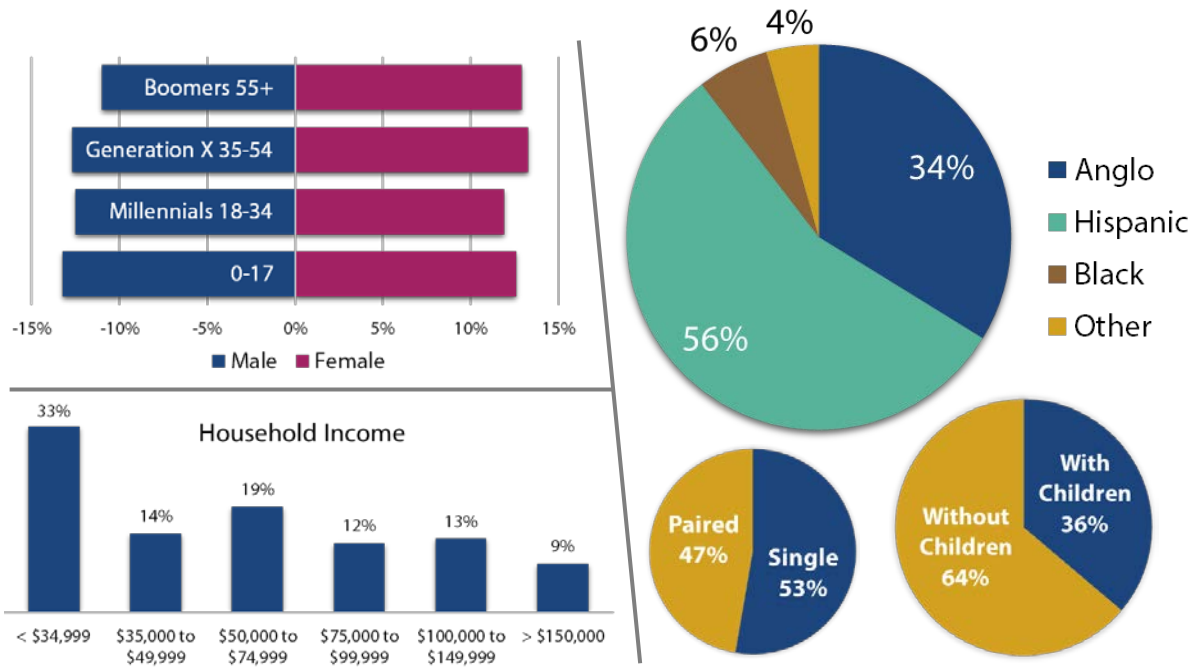

FIGURE 33 San Antonio Metropolitan Demographic Profile.

While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[14], knowing the racial composition of the San Antonio area is still important. San Antonio differs dramatically from larger metropolitan areas in that Anglos are not only not the majority, but they are a minority to a Hispanic majority. Hispanics in San Antonio make up over 56 percent of the population in 2015. Also unique is that the proportion of black and other racial groups in

[14] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

San Antonio is significantly lower than other metropolitan areas. Combined, these two groups only make up 10 percent of the total population.

Only 47 percent of the population is married or paired, which again closely matched Corpus Christi but differs greatly from other metropolitan regions and the state in general. However, households with children more closely align with the state and is lower than larger metropolitan areas.

Housing Profile

The San Antonio metropolitan area includes Bexar, Comal, Guadalupe, and Kendall Counties. Of those surveyed, respondents reported 91 percent of their last transactions were for clients purchasing a home. The remaining 9 percent either leased or rented.

Seventy-five percent of all home sales in the survey were less than $300,000; only 6 percent were greater than $500,000, making San Antonio one of the least expensive major metropolitan areas in Texas (FIGURE 34). The distribution of surveyed sales prices compared to actual sales prices in the San Antonio area in 2015 reveals a close correlation between the two, giving validity to the local responses. Rental properties under $1,500 per month represented just over one-half of rental/lease transactions, with the majority between $1,000 and $2,000 per month.

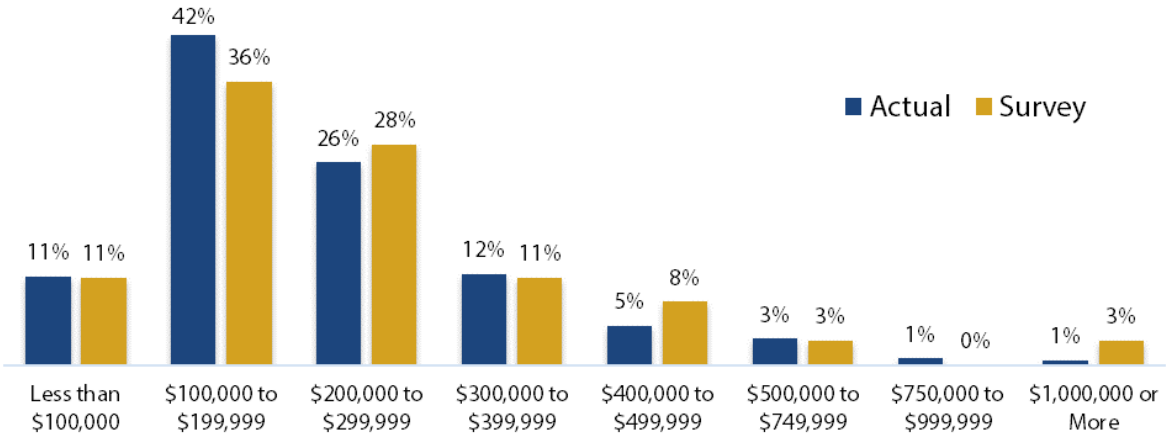

FIGURE 34 Survey Distribution of San Antonio Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In the San Antonio metropolitan area, there were a total of 148 completed and valid responses with 57 moving from outside the region to San Antonio. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing the San Antonio Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 35 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 38. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX G: SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES.

TABLE 38 Moving to San Antonio Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	4.42	6.18	159.0	0.000	4.91	6.16	206.5	0.007
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	4.84	5.92	210.0	0.006				
Traffic congestion or commute distance	3.53	5.05	202.0	0.006				
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.63	1.89	220.5	0.006				
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.87	3.09	142.0	0.027				
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)					4.22	5.86	78.5	0.019

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for income groups and generational groups can be seen in TABLE 39 and TABLE 40. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. Note that for the income group in San Antonio, there were not enough responses to create a significant sample size for the low income category.

SAN ANTONIO: Why Move to the Region?

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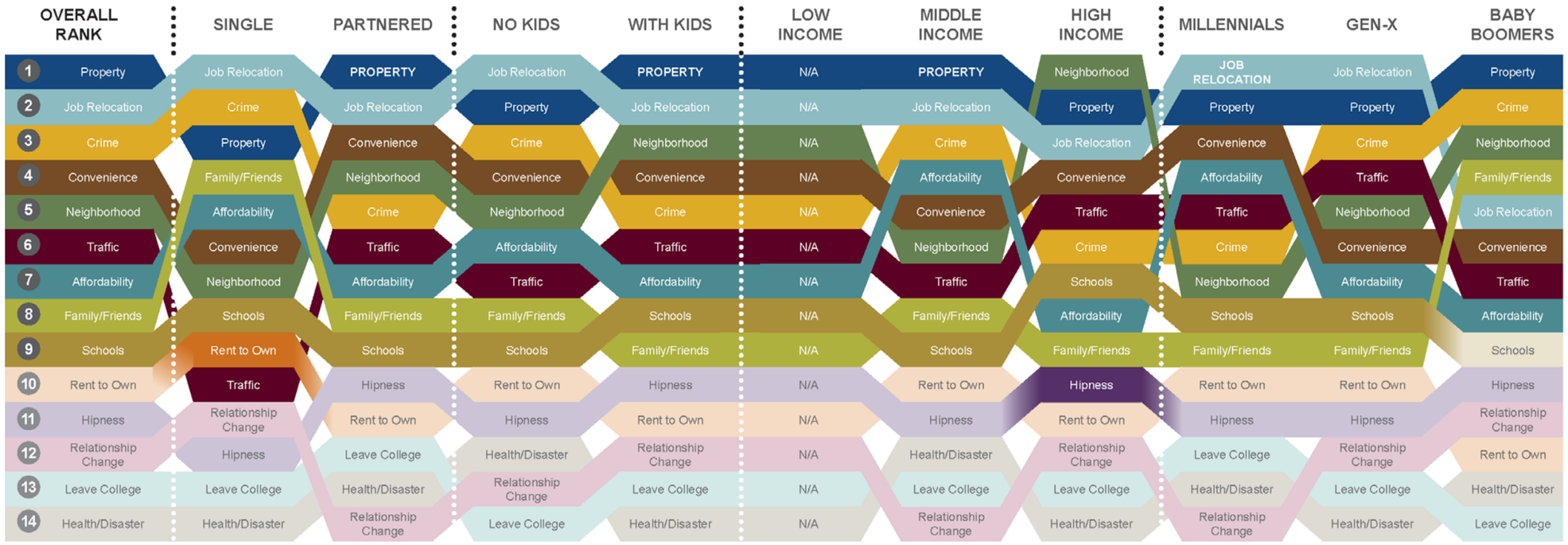

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

N.A. — There were not enough responses in this demographic to reach the statistically appropriate sample size for analysis.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 35 San Antonio: Why Move to the Region?

TABLE 39 Moving to San Antonio ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 54	5.87	0.005
Generational Differences			
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 54	5.29	0.008
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2, 54	4.08	0.022
School quality	2, 54	9.08	0.000

TABLE 40: Moving to San Antonio LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	High Income	3.88	Middle Income	5.32	0.009
			Low Income	n/a	n/a
Generational Differences					
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Gen-X	5.03	Baby Boomer	3.31	0.002
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	Baby Boomer	1.40	Millennials	4.42	0.000
			Gen-X	3.84	0.001
School quality	Baby Boomer	4.44	Millennials	6.58	0.008
			Gen-X	5.76	0.042

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 36 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 41. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX G: SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES.

SAN ANTONIO: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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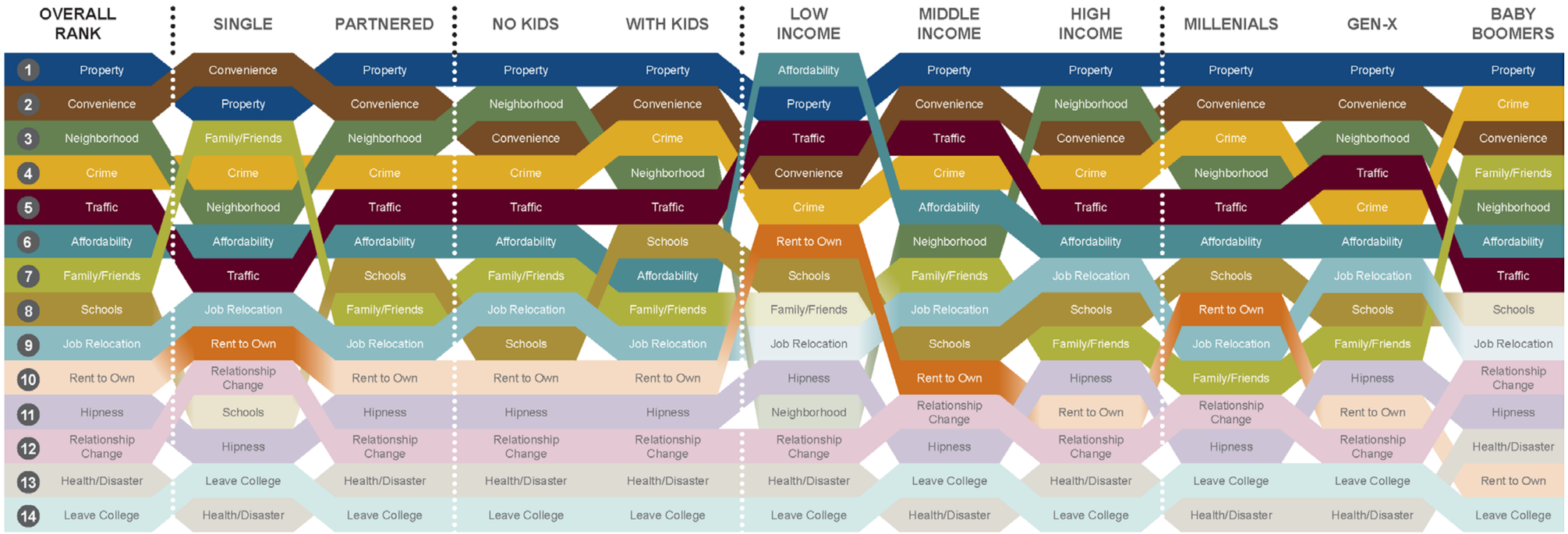


How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

N.A. — There were not enough responses in this demographic to reach the statistically appropriate sample size for analysis.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 36 San Antonio: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

TABLE 41 Moving to a San Antonio Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	4.84	5.50	1320.5	0.015				
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation					4.74	3.85	577.5	0.047
School quality	2.66	4.18	1142.0	0.001				
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2.89	1.99	1371.0	0.014				

Factor (continued)	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	5.48	4.72	966.0	0.034
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	4.84	4.00	947.5	0.028
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4.68	3.48	887.5	0.011
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	4.32	4.28		
School quality	4.03	2.60	887.0	0.010
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.10	1.76	944.5	0.016
Cool factor or hipness	2.64	1.52	855.0	0.003

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 42 and TABLE 43. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 42 Moving to a San Antonio Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 144	4.37	0.006
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	3, 144	2.91	0.037
Proximity to family and friends	3, 144	4.95	0.003

TABLE 42 Continued

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
Traffic congestion or commute distance	2, 129	8.01	0.001
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	2, 129	3.29	0.041
School quality	2, 129	4.29	0.016
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2, 129	4.71	0.011
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 129	11.92	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	2, 129	3.56	0.031

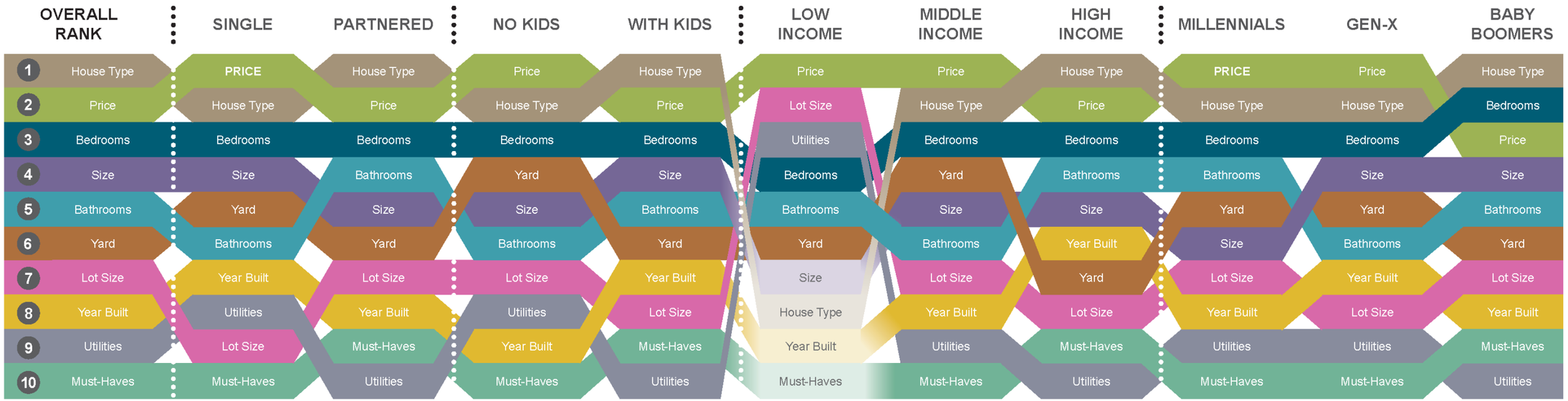
TABLE 43 Moving to a San Antonio Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	Low Income	2.20	Middle Income	4.84	0.002
			High Income	5.15	0.001
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Middle Income	4.86	High Income	3.90	0.022
Proximity to family and friends	Middle Income	4.47	High Income	2.97	0.001
Generational Differences					
Traffic congestion or commute distance	Baby Boomer	3.38	Millennials	4.87	0.002
			Gen-X	4.89	0.000
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	Millennials	4.87	Baby Boomer	3.68	0.014
School quality	Baby Boomer	2.81	Millennials	4.35	0.007
			Gen-X	3.92	0.021
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	Baby Boomer	2.73	Millennials	4.23	0.014
			Gen-X	4.17	0.005
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	4.29	Gen-X	2.81	0.002
			Baby Boomer	1.70	0.000
	Gen-X	2.81	Baby Boomer	1.70	0.015
Cool factor or hipness	Gen-X	2.81	Baby Boomer	1.84	0.009

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 37 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

SAN ANTONIO: Why Choose that House?



How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 37 San Antonio: Why Choose That House?

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 44. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX G: SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES.

TABLE 44 Choosing a Home in San Antonio Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Number of bedrooms	5.08	5.41	1337.0	0.020				
Acreage and/or lot size	3.53	4.56	1224.0	0.004				
Cost of utilities					4.17	3.61	1952.5	0.043
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3.05	4.00	1273.0	0.009				
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
Price	5.82	5.12	937.0	0.020				
Year structure was built/renovated					4.23	2.85	526.5	0.020

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 45 and TABLE 46. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 45 Choosing a Home in San Antonio ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	3, 144	7.54	0.000
Number of bedrooms	3, 144	2.78	0.043
Square footage	3, 144	3.97	0.009
Year structure was built/renovated	3, 144	6.94	0.000
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	3, 144	3.95	0.010
Generational Differences			
Price	2, 129	5.88	0.004

TABLE 46 Choosing a Home in San Antonio LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	Low Income	2.60	Middle Income	5.75	0.000
			High Income	5.79	0.000
Number of bedrooms	Low Income	3.60	Middle Income	5.55	0.005
			High Income	5.31	0.014
Square footage	Low Income	2.80	Middle Income	5.22	0.001
			High Income	5.05	0.002
Year structure was built/renovated	Low Income	1.60	Middle Income	4.20	0.002
			High Income	4.95	0.000
	Middle Income	4.2	High Income	4.95	0.048
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	Low Income	1.00	Middle Income	3.69	0.002
			High Income	4.00	0.001
Generational Differences					
Price	Baby Boomer	5.11	Millennials	6.06	0.002
			Gen-X	5.83	0.006

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX G: SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

San Antonio versus Texas

Choosing the San Antonio Area

While San Antonians follow other Texans in placing a high value on the property itself, the most common attractor to the metropolitan area is jobs. Through a career change, a new military posting, or retirement, jobs bring people to the city. Unlike other areas of Texas, when comparing attributes about the city with other urban areas, the city's reputation and aesthetics take a back seat to the relatively low crime rate and convenience the community offers.

Choosing a Neighborhood

San Antonians follow the rest of Texans in how they choose a neighborhood, with one exception: the importance of convenience. As with choosing the region as a whole, residents place a significantly higher value on the convenience a neighborhood offers over other factors, including neighborhood aesthetics and crime—something not seen in other regions in Texas.

Selecting the Right House

San Antonio is one of two metropolitan areas surveyed that place a higher importance on the type of house (single-family detached, townhouse, condominium, multifamily, etc.) over price—the other being Corpus Christi. However, as opposed to Corpus Christi, the type of house and price score nearly equally to each other, indicating a possible resistance to sacrificing either of the two.

Why Move to San Antonio?

Respondents were first asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the San Antonio metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area. All the ranked factors in this section are under this context.

San Antonians Overall

San Antonians gave equal weight to both the property they purchased and circumstances related to a job relocation or career change when considering the region. The importance given to the property does not indicate that new residents moved because of a specific house but rather shows the house being a pivotal factor in their location decision.

New residents give higher importance to the convenience that San Antonio neighborhoods and the city as a whole offer (being close to entertainment options, groceries, banks, etc.) over the region's reputation and general aesthetics. More concern is given to the region's crime rate than other regional factors.

Singles versus Couples

Couples place significantly higher value on the property itself in the region, likely indicating attributes about the house (or its affordability) are a primary attractor to the region. (Due to the high military presence, this could also indicate a lack of choice due to housing restrictions.) Couples also place a significantly higher rating on being relocated by a job (also likely influenced by the military) than singles, even though singles rank it higher in importance.

Singles, however, place a significantly lower importance on the region's overall traffic and commute times and the city's neighborhood reputation and overall aesthetics compared to couples. Instead, they place a much higher importance on nearness to family and friends and the crime rate of the area in attracting them to the region. Singles are also much more likely to move to the San Antonio region to become homeowners after renting than couples, pairing well with their views about the region's affordability (which also ranks higher for singles).

Children versus No Children

Families with children, like couples, also place the property at the top of the importance ranking. Families with children place a much higher value on the reputation and

aesthetics of the city's neighborhood offerings than those without children. Families also rank school quality higher in importance than their counterparts.

Those without children are more likely to be transferred to the region for their job. These buyers rate the region's affordability over traffic concerns, nearness to family and friends, and school quality (in that order).

Income Considerations

The sample size for low-income households moving to the San Antonio area from another state or region was too low to create a reasonable estimate of importance rankings.

Middle-income buyers rank the city's crime rate higher and note that the affordability of the metropolitan area is significantly more important than for high-income buyers. San Antonio's relatively broad housing selection at affordable prices confirms this. And while middle-income buyers still look to the convenience of the region's offerings over the neighborhood's reputation, both are relatively low on their ranking of importance.

High-income buyers, though, are the only group that emphasizes the quality of neighborhoods in the region—in fact, this ranks more important for attracting buyers to the region than any other quality. San Antonio's historic and beautiful neighborhoods are the likely culprit. These buyers also rank school quality higher than middle-income buyers. This is also the only group to consider how hip the region is as a deciding factor. For these buyers, San Antonio offers more than jobs; it offers high living.

Generational Divides

Differences in generational attitudes toward moving to San Antonio follow predictable trends. As buyers age, affordability and the city's convenience become less important, while the city's crime rate and neighborhood aesthetics, reputation, and amenities (e.g., hike and bike trails and parks) become more important.

Baby boomers differ the most, ranking nearness to friends and family significantly more important and relocating due to a job significantly less important than other generations. Regional traffic and commute times are hardly a concern.

Generation X, however, pays more attention to regional traffic concerns than the other generations. For them, jobs are what attract them to the city with regional and neighborhood conveniences much lower in importance.

Millennials predominantly move to the region for a new job but also consider the region attractive due to its affordability, convenience, and traffic concerns. For them, crime is significantly less of an issue, as is the city's reputation.

Additional Findings

Those looking to purchase a property rank the region's overall affordability as a significantly less important factor than those renting, likely confirming the region's broad appeal to home buyers.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within the San Antonio area. This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

San Antonians Overall

Like most other Texans, when selecting a neighborhood, San Antonians prioritize the neighborhood for the house they like the most; some attribute about the house wins out over all else. However, when selecting a neighborhood, convenient access to entertainment, services, and food beats out the neighborhood's reputation, aesthetics, and amenities—a practical departure from the rest of the state. Other neighborhood characteristics such as the area's crime rate, traffic concerns, and affordability follow closely behind.

Singles versus Couples

Singles take convenience a step further than any other group in San Antonio, ranking this as the number-one factor for moving to the neighborhood they did. This contrasts with their view of traffic congestion and travel time, which rank much lower than for most other groups. Singles also note that living near friends and family is of significant importance, ranking just behind neighborhood convenience and attributes of the property.

Couples, however, place a significantly higher importance on the quality of the area schools, traffic, and the neighborhood's reputation than singles. They are also significantly less likely to be transitioning from renting to owning than singles.

Children versus No Children

While there are no statistically significant differences between buyers with children and those without and they share similar attributes for the top five ranks, how they rank priorities in the neighborhood decision-making process does differ a bit. Most noticeably, buyers with children give the highest ranking to school quality, unlike any other group.

Buyers without children tend to place the neighborhood's reputation and aesthetics over convenience, a trait shared only by high-income buyers in San Antonio.

Income Considerations

Low-income buyers find considerably fewer attributes important when looking for a neighborhood than other income groups. For them, the affordability of the area rises to the top of the importance list. Convenience drops considerably, giving way to traffic concerns (likely travel time to work). Transitioning from renting to owning is of considerable importance, while factors such as how reputable a neighborhood is drop completely off the list.

Middle-income buyers also place a high value on traffic concerns but are concerned less with the affordability of the neighborhood overall. They also place less importance on a neighborhood's reputation and aesthetics but instead place a much higher importance on nearness to family and friends than other tiers.

High-income buyers are better able to place a higher importance on the luxury attributes of the neighborhood, such as its reputation and hipness. Traffic concerns rank considerably lower for high-income buyers than the other two income tiers, likely indicating an increased ability to purchase in a neighborhood that offers shorter commutes.

Generational Divides

While generation X and millennials are quite similar to each other, baby boomers differ quite a bit. Baby boomers consider very few factors important overall and rank crime in the area considerably more important than other generations. Baby boomers instead want to be located near friends and family. Baby boomers also care significantly less about traffic and transportation concerns than other generations.

Millennials and generation X rank factors such as traffic, school quality, and job relocations significantly more important than baby boomers. Generation X ranks how hip a neighborhood is higher than other generations although it is not an important factor in the decision-making process.

Millennials view neighborhood amenities less important than crime or convenience and instead place significantly higher importance on affordability and transitioning from renting to home ownership.

Additional Findings

Those who are looking to buy place a much higher importance on the neighborhood's reputation, aesthetics, and amenities than renters.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house made San Antonians weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

San Antonians Overall

When choosing a specific house, San Antonians give nearly equal weight to the type of house (single-family detached, townhome, condominium, multifamily, etc.) and the price of the home. This indicates that both factors equally impact the overall decision over all others. After those ranges are set, the size of the actual house (number of bedrooms, square footage, and number of bathrooms) trumps the size of the lot and other internal factors. This could indicate more concern for whether or not the home itself will meet the buyer's living needs than for amenities.

Singles versus Couples

Couples paid more attention to the number of bathrooms and the size of the lot over their single counterparts, likely for or in preparation for children.

While house type and price are nearly equal for most San Antonians, price is king for singles, and significantly so. Other cost-of-living concerns, such as the cost of utilities, also ranked significantly higher for singles.

Children versus No Children

Buyers with and without children share the top three factors—price, home type, and the number of bedrooms—when choosing a home. However, families with children give more importance to the type of house than the price. For families with children, the cost of utilities is significantly less important than for those without children. These families also place a higher importance on the year their home was built, likely looking for newer homes in the area.

Buyers with no children rank price slightly higher (similar to singles) and give a significantly (and curiously) higher importance to the presence of a yard (this could be explained by a desire to not have a yard as a preference).

Income Considerations

Low-income buyers again have a limited list of factors they find important in the decision process. For them, cost of living is the most important (with cost ranking first and the cost of utilities ranking third). The type of house is significantly unimportant, though lot size matters quite a bit.

High-income buyers, however, approach the process differently from middle-income buyers. They place a significantly higher importance and rank on luxuries such as the year the property was built, the type of house, and those must-have upgrades they could not live without. Middle-income buyers, however, put higher importance on the lot size and whether or not there is a yard.

Generational Divides

Generational preferences for finding a home are very similar, with only marginal differences between each generation. Most noticeably, the biggest difference appears between the baby boomers and the other generations. Baby boomers place significantly lower importance on the price of a home than others. Like baby boomers around Texas, they place a higher importance than other generations on must-have upgrades and the type of house.

Millennials, on the other hand, place a lower importance on the home's size and a greater importance on the number of bathrooms (likely indicating a need for a house that meets their basic needs).

Additional Findings

Those looking to buy a property place a significantly higher importance on the year the structure was built or renovated than those who rent or lease.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 30 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

San Antonio respondents cited something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 38). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the clincher for the buyer. San Antonio has the smallest share of home-specific reasons than any other metropolitan area. Transportation and other concerns consume a much higher share.

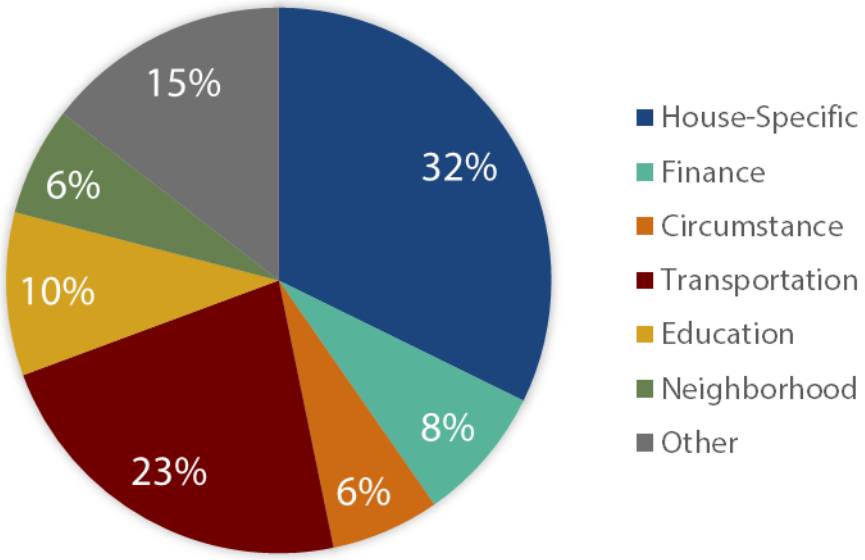


FIGURE 38 Open Responses Given for San Antonio.

Transportation concerns contribute almost one-fourth of those other reasons—higher than any other area measured in the survey. Respondents said many of their clients

wanted to be close to work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. This likely explains San Antonian's preference for the convenience of the city as a whole and the neighborhood they chose since elements of these transportation concerns are found in a mixture of convenience, family and friends, and traffic. In many cases noted by respondents, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, convenience, crime rate, and ultimately the property itself. This survey reveals that traffic congestion and commute times in San Antonio are most important to low- and middle-income buyers.

THE CORPUS CHRISTI METROPOLITAN AREA

Home to the United States' fifth largest port and a stable tourism industry, Corpus Christi lives up to its nickname as the Texas Riviera. The city's rich past, beautiful scenery, and rich industry make Corpus Christi (Texas' eighth largest city) an ideal place to enjoy a high quality of life in a vibrant community. As this community grows, why do people choose this region? What makes them stay? And once in the area, what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section looks at the survey results from Texas REALTORS® about their last transaction to summarize the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX H: CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understanding who lives in Corpus Christi is important to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they do. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates approximately 1,100,000 people live in the greater Corpus Christi metropolitan area—the smallest major metropolitan area analyzed independently in this research.

Generational splits in Corpus Christi differ significantly from other metropolitan areas in Texas. Here, baby boomers and older residents make up a significantly higher proportion of the population than any other group. While the youngest generation is of significant size as well, the distribution indicates an aging community. Millennials and generation X match each other almost identically. FIGURE 39 provides a demographic snapshot of the Austin metropolitan area included in this survey (*85,86,87,88*).

Corpus Christi's distribution of income differs significantly from other large metropolitan areas in Texas, more closely resembling San Antonio as a whole. Corpus Christi has the highest proportion of households making less than $35,000 per year. Additionally, the area has a significantly higher number of households in middle-income tiers than other areas, second only to San Antonio. Corpus Christi also has the fewest number of high-income households, deviating significantly from state averages. This income distribution is likely due to a relatively high number of retirees on pensions and a significant number of minorities. The median income in Corpus Christi is the lowest of all other areas and the state's at approximately $50,000.

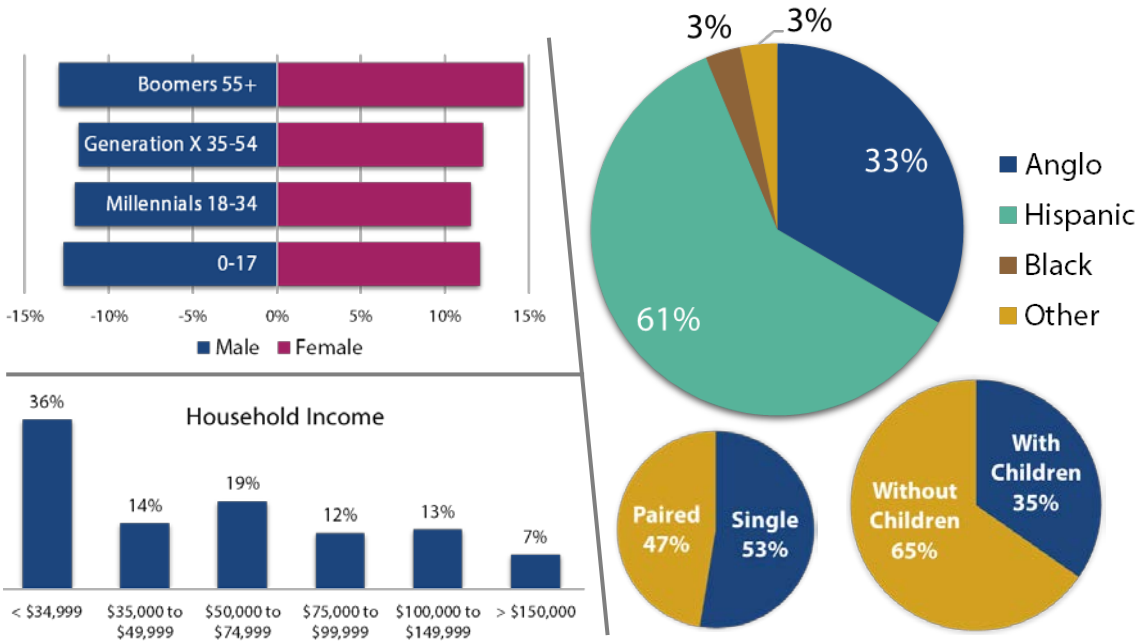


FIGURE 39 Corpus Christi Metropolitan Demographic Profile.

While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[15], knowing the racial composition of the Corpus Christi area is still important. Corpus Christi, like San Antonio, differs

[15] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

dramatically from larger metropolitan areas in that Anglos are not only not the majority, but they are a significant minority to a Hispanic majority. Hispanics in Corpus Christi make up over 61 percent of the population in 2015. Also, like San Antonio, the proportion of black and other racial groups in Corpus Christi is lower than any other metropolitan areas. Combined, these two groups only make up six percent of the total population.

Only 47 percent of the population is married or paired, which again is nearly identical to San Antonio but differs greatly from other metropolitan regions and the state in general. However, households with children more closely align with the state and is lower than larger metropolitan areas.

Housing Profile

The Corpus Christi metropolitan area includes Nueces, Aransas, and San Patricio Counties. Of the respondents, 97 percent of their last transactions were for clients purchasing a home (the largest proportion of any Texas metropolitan area). The remaining 3 percent either leased or rented.

Eighty-one percent of all home sales in the survey were less than $300,000; none of the homes sold in the survey were above $500,000 or below $100,000. This makes Corpus Christi one of the least expensive real estate markets in the survey, though this could also be influenced by a smaller sample size (FIGURE 40). The distribution of surveyed sales prices compared to actual sales prices in the Corpus Christi area in 2015 reveals a relatively close correlation between the two, slightly oversampling the two largest price categories and under sampling homes less than $100,000. However, this difference does not significantly detract from the validity of the sample. The one rental property that respondents noted in the survey was between $2,000 and $2,500 per month.

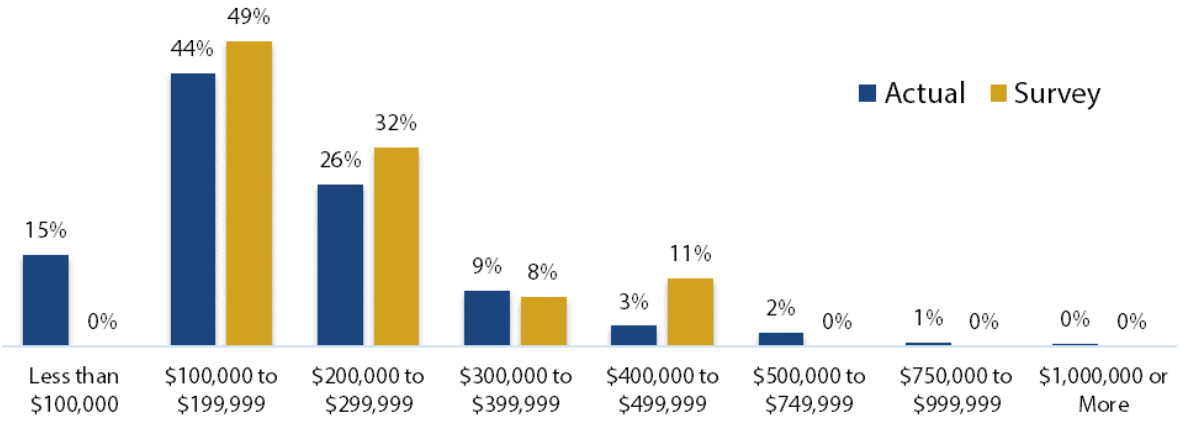


FIGURE 40 Survey Distribution of Corpus Christi Home Sales Prices Compared to Actual Sales.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In the Corpus Christi metropolitan area, there were a total of 40 completed and valid responses with 11 moving from outside the region to Corpus Christi. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing the Corpus Christi Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 41 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 47. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX H: CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES.

TABLE 47 Moving to Corpus Christi Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.
Proximity to family and friends	6.00	3.00	0.5	0.021				
School quality					4.00	1.00	4.0	0.037

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 48 and TABLE 49. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. Note that for the income group in Corpus Christi, there were not enough responses to create a significant sample size for the low income category. Additionally, there were no significant differences within the income group.

TABLE 48 Moving to Corpus Christi ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
School quality	2, 8	5.26	0.035

CORPUS CHRISTI: Why Move to the Region?

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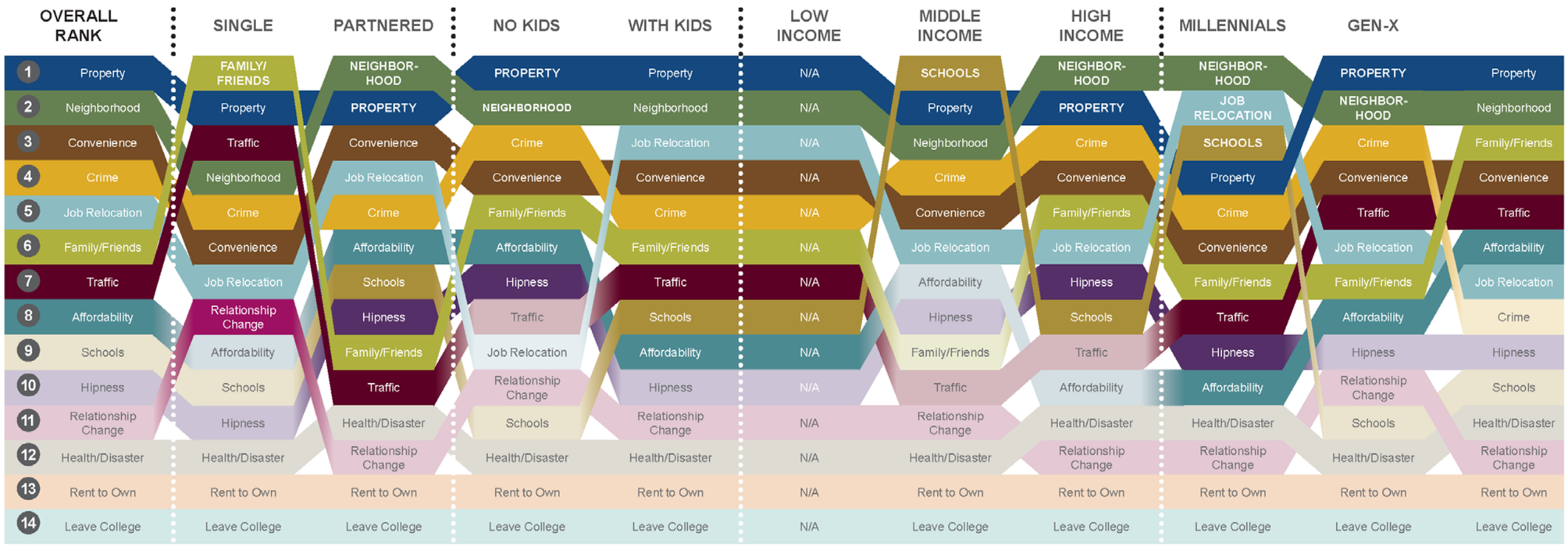

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

N.A. — There were not enough responses in this demographic to reach the statistically appropriate sample size for analysis.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 41 Corpus Christi: Why Move to the Region?

TABLE 49 Moving to Corpus Christi LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
School quality	Millennials	7.00	Gen-X	2.17	0.018
			Baby Boomer	1.67	0.019

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 42 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 50. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX H: CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES.

TABLE 50 Moving to a Corpus Christi Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
School quality					3.42	4.85	119.5	0.043
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	4.80	2.17	33.0	0.000				

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 51 and TABLE 52. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 51 Moving to a Corpus Christi Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 37	4.66	0.016

TABLE 51 Continued

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
School quality	2, 31	4.45	0.020
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 31	4.71	0.016

TABLE 52 Moving to a Corpus Christi Neighborhood Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Middle Income	4.20	High Income	1.30	0.004
			Low Income	n/a	n/a
Generational Differences					
School quality	Baby Boomer	1.50	Millennials	5.15	0.006
			Gen-X	4.00	0.046
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	4.44	Gen-X	2.24	0.020
			Baby Boomer	1.00	0.014

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 43 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 53. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX H: CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES.

TABLE 53 Choosing a Home in Corpus Christi Test Results

Factor	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.	Employed	Under-employed	U	Sig.
Price					6.13	4.50	13.5	0.009
Number of bedrooms					6.00	3.50	14.5	0.008
Square footage					5.77	4.00	23.5	0.037
Presence of yard	4.84	5.75	122.5	0.046				

RURAL: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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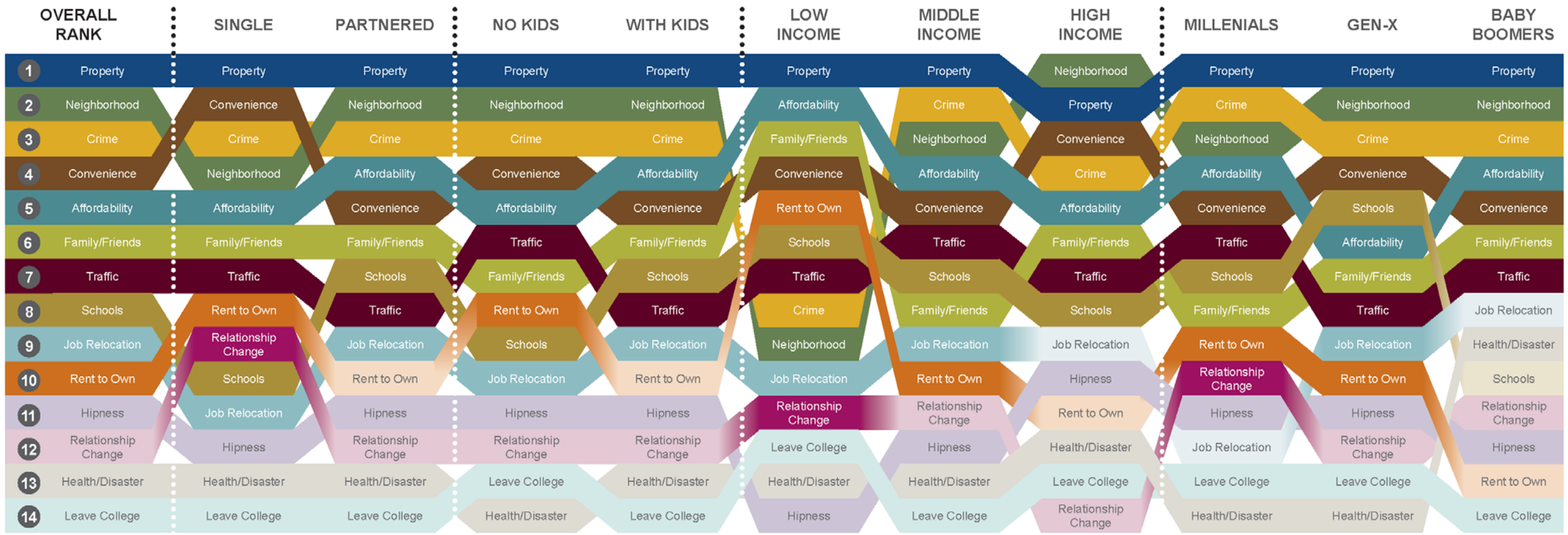

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 42 Corpus Christi: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

CORPUS CHRISTI: Why Choose that House?

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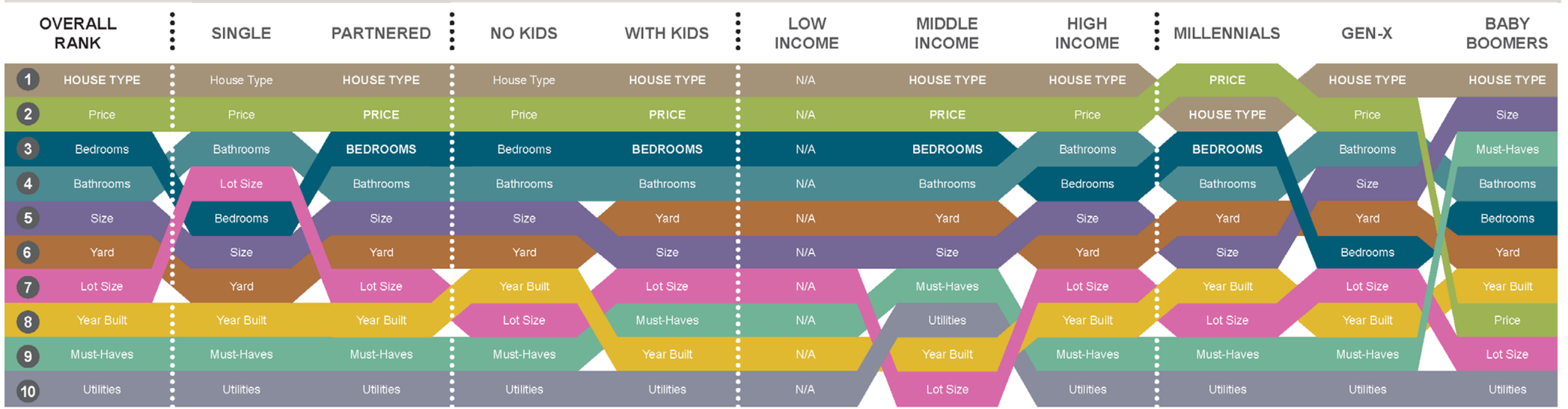

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

N.A. — There were not enough responses in this demographic to reach the statistically appropriate sample size for analysis.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Price	Final price of the home.
House Type	Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
Bedrooms	The number of bedrooms.
Bathrooms	The number of bathrooms.
Size	The square footage of the home.
Lot Size	The property lot size or acreage.
Yard	The presence or absence of a yard.
Year Built	The year the property was built or renovated.
Utilities	The average cost of utilities.
Must-Haves	The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 43 Corpus Christi: Why Choose That House?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 54 and TABLE 55. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences within the income group.

TABLE 54 Choosing a Home in Corpus Christi ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
Price	2, 31	3.89	0.031

TABLE 55 Choosing a Home in Corpus Christi LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Price	Millennials	6.46	Baby Boomer	5.00	0.015

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX H: CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Corpus Christi versus Texas

Choosing the Corpus Christi Area

While most metropolitan areas closely mimic one another, Corpus Christi stands out. Corpus Christians rank elements about the neighborhood (its reputation, aesthetics, convenience to services, and crime rate) as a more important reason to move to the area and rate job relocation much lower than every other area. New residents note they moved to the region to be close to family and friends as a more important factor than any other metropolitan area.

Choosing a Neighborhood

Being close to family not only plays a role in drawing residents to Corpus Christi, but it also makes a big difference when they choose a neighborhood, far exceeding the Texas average. Compared to the rest of Texas, school plays a much greater role in Corpus Christi, swapping places with traffic concerns (which rank lowest among those factors noted as important).

Selecting the Right House

Unlike nearly every other area in Texas, Corpus Christians' most important factor for choosing a home is the home type itself rather than price, perhaps reflecting the relatively low prices for the homes. This is echoed by their focus on elements of the house itself (number of bathrooms, square footage, etc.) over other attributes, which differs slightly from other areas. They also place a higher importance on those must-have upgrades than the rest of Texas.

Why Move to Corpus Christi?

Respondents were first asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the Corpus Christi metropolitan area. This question was only asked if the respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area. All the ranked factors in this section are under this context.

Corpus Christians Overall

In most urban areas, a new job or career change is the main factor that attracts people to the region. But that is not so in Corpus Christi. For new residents to the area, Corpus Christi's neighborhoods, their reputation, aesthetics, and amenities are important to their decision. This factor and the number-one factor, the property itself, far outshine any other factor used when buyers were choosing to move to the area. After the significant gap between the second and third factors, the convenience of the area and regional crime rates were ranked third and fourth, and being relocated for a new job ranks fifth. This likely reflects the area's leisurely and picturesque setting along the coast.

Singles versus Couples

Singles overwhelmingly move to the Corpus Christi area to be close to family and friends (significantly more so than couples). Singles also rank traffic as a much higher deciding factor than couples. In addition to job relocation or changes, relationship changes also rank as an important factor.

Couples, however, note that the neighborhood quality and property drew them the most to the region. For couples, traditional factors such as the region's affordability and school quality play an important factor in their decision to move to the area. This is not the case for singles; these were not important at all. The hipness of the Corpus Christi area also draws couples, possibly as a factor in retirement.

Children versus No Children

Buyers with and without children share the top two factors for choosing the Corpus Christi area: the properties the city offers and the neighborhood aesthetics and city reputation. But while there are no statistically significant differences between buyers with and without children, each groups' ranking does differ quite a bit. Buyers with children are much more likely to move to the area due to a new job or career change (this is not an important factor at all for those without children).

For those without children, both nearness to family and friends and the hipness of the area rank highly (while the hipness factor is unimportant to those with children). Notably in this group, a job change, schools, and traffic concerns are not important factors attracting them to the region.

Income Considerations

The sample size for low-income households moving to the Corpus Christi area from another state or region was too low to create a reasonable estimate of importance rankings. Also, there were no statistically significant differences in importance between the remaining middle- and high-income groups, though again, there are some ranking differences.

Middle-income buyers rank school quality as a crucial factor in their decision to move to the region. This pushes the usual top four factors—property, neighborhood, crime, and convenience—a notch down.

High-income buyers place much more importance on the neighborhood quality and amenities, also noting importance for factors such as nearness to family and friends and the region's hipness (these are not important at all to middle-income buyers). For both groups, traffic concerns (congestion and commute times) and the area's affordability are not important factors.

Generational Divides

Millennials place an extremely high importance on a few factors when choosing the Corpus Christi area, most notably Corpus Christi's aesthetics and reputation, relocating for a new job, and the quality of the area's school system. Millennials also consider the region's hipness as an important factor when choosing the region.

The addition of several other factors pushes the importance of things such as traffic, the area's convenience, and affordability lower on the rankings (not that these are necessarily less important, just that they are more likely to be bumped).

While baby boomers and generation X are similar in most ways, baby boomers tend to be more concerned about being closer to family and friends and the region's overall cost of living than generation X.

Additional Findings

Buyers who are employed full time ranked the region's school quality significantly more important than those who are underemployed.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within the Corpus Christi area. This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

Corpus Christians Overall

The reasons for buyers to move to the Corpus Christi region closely resemble the reasons that buyers select a specific neighborhood, placing the property itself, neighborhood reputation, amenities, and convenience at the top of the list. At this level, though, nearness to family and friends and school quality become much more important. Traffic concerns and commute time are relatively unimportant at this level.

Singles versus Couples

Couples choosing a neighborhood rate school quality as a crucial factor, presumably because they are more likely to have children at that age. While school quality is important for singles, it ranks at the bottom of the list. Couples also view affordability relatively higher than singles.

Singles in Corpus Christi are more likely to choose a neighborhood based on a change in their relationship status or job relocation, giving higher importance to traffic and commute time concerns than couples. This likely indicates that couples trade off commute time concerns for other things, such as schools and affordability.

Children versus No Children

Buyers with children mimic the views of couples, though they place slightly more importance on the convenience of the neighborhood (closeness to shops, groceries, etc.) than those without children (or couples in general). These families also give more importance to schools and cost-of-living concerns than those without children.

Like singles, those without children place a much higher importance on the crime rate of a neighborhood and traffic concerns than those with children. These buyers look at the hipness of the neighborhood they choose and are likely to choose a neighborhood based on their transition from renting to owning or change in relationship status.

Income Considerations

The sample size for low-income households choosing a neighborhood in the Corpus Christi area was too low to create a reasonable estimate of importance rankings.

While both middle- and high-income buyers place the highest importance on the house itself and the neighborhood's aesthetic value and amenities, middle-income buyers then look at the affordability of the neighborhood and school quality over other factors. Additionally, these buyers are significantly more likely to be transitioning from renting to owning.

High-income buyers, though, put a very high importance on nearness to family and friends over other groups. They consider factors such as the neighborhood's crime rate and traffic and commute concerns over things such as affordability, the neighborhood's hipness, and school quality.

Generational Divides

After property and neighborhood issues near the top of all generations, there are differences in how Corpus Christians select their neighborhood. Traffic issues become more important and school quality importance declines as generations age. For example, baby boomers place significantly lower importance on school quality and rank

affordability and selecting the area based on a job change (or retirement) higher than younger generations.

Generation X ranks nearness to family and the neighborhood's safety as much more important than other groups. Affordability, convenience, and traffic concerns are lower on the priority list when choosing a neighborhood.

Millennials value school quality extremely highly, even over neighborhood amenities and convenience. They are significantly more likely to be transitioning from renting to owning and value affordability and nearness to family and friends. This likely points to millennials just beginning to transition into a new life stage.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house made Corpus Christians weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

Corpus Christians Overall

Across the board, the type of house (single-family detached, townhome, condominium, multifamily, etc.) is the most important factor in choosing a home for Corpus Christians—even over price. Price is more closely matched with the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, which follow close behind. Residents in Corpus Christi ranked basic characteristics about the house over elements outside of the home (yard and lot size).

Singles versus Couples

While there are no statistically significant differences between single buyers and couples, there are a couple differences in how important they ranked each factor. Couples place an extremely high importance on the type of home, price, and number of bedrooms above all else.

Singles rank the size of the lot higher and the presence of a yard lower than couples, potentially indicating their preference for smaller lots or homes without a yard. Additionally, they do not put as much importance on the number of bedrooms as couples.

Children versus No Children

Buyers with and without children look for houses in much the same way, ranking the type of house, price, and number of bedrooms and bathrooms as most important (with those with children placing an especially high importance on the first three). Buyers with children place a significant amount of importance on the presence of a yard over those who do not have children. Those with children also rank must-have upgrades in the house (e.g., a pool, granite counters, or other built-ins) slightly higher than those without children. These, taken together, show a desire to find a home that more closely fits the needs of their family over luxuries such as space and newness.

Buyers without children generally look for a newer home and put less importance on the size of the lot that those with children.

Income Considerations

The sample size for low-income households choosing a neighborhood in the Corpus Christi area was too low to create a reasonable estimate of importance rankings. And while there are no statistically significant differences between the remaining two income groups, they rank factors for selecting a house a bit differently.

Both groups rank the house type first and extremely important. Most noticeably, middle-income buyers are much more concerned about the cost of living than high-income buyers, ranking the price of the home as extremely important and the cost of utilities higher than others. For these buyers, must-have upgrades replace lot size in importance, indicating that middle-income buyers would sacrifice a larger lot for amenities that are not normally standard on a home.

Generational Divides

Likely the largest survey differences lie among generational lines when choosing a home. Baby boomers most noticeably care very little about the cost of living, significantly rating price near the bottom of importance when choosing a home—near the cost of utilities. Instead, baby boomers want the right square footage and those must-have upgrades as they enter their later years.

Generation X follows a similar pattern, though much more muted than the baby boomers, by also placing a high importance on square footage (though not over price). Generation X also ranks the number of bedrooms much less important than both other generations.

Millennials highly value price (significantly), the type of house, and the number of bedrooms (in that order) over baby boomers (and to a lesser extent, generation X). For them, price matters, as does the newness of the home.

Additional Findings

Fully employed buyers view the price and size of their home (number of bedrooms and square footage) significantly more important than those who are underemployed.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 30 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

Corpus Christi respondents cited something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 44). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer.

Respondents also cited financial concerns as playing a major role in the selection of the property. While this usually concerns the actual sticker price of the home, other reasons include buyers feeling they were getting a good value on the property or having the right financing/down payment options available to them. The "other" category holds a small percentage of reasons. In this case, these include homes that would be lived in as a second home (seasonal) and used as an investment for rental at other times of the year.

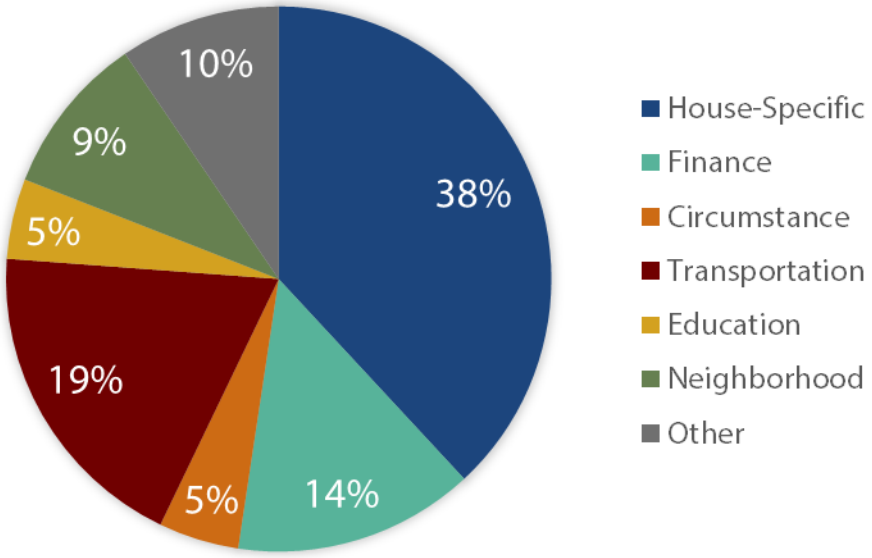

FIGURE 44 Open Responses Given for Corpus Christi.

Transportation concerns contribute almost one-fifth of those other reasons. Respondents said many of their clients wanted to be close to family, friends, work, or nearby amenities and entertainment options. While traffic concerns play a very small role in the location choice decision for Corpus Christians, other transportation elements can be found in a mixture of convenience and family and friends. In many cases noted by respondents, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as

price, the neighborhood, convenience, crime rate, and ultimately the property itself. This should be examined with the consideration that traffic and commute times in Corpus Christi are generally good when compared with many of the larger metropolitan areas in Texas.

THE RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS IN TEXAS

As one of the nation's largest and most diverse states, rural and small-town Texas has a lot to offer. From the western plains to the eastern pine forests and down the coast to the mouth of the Rio Grande, Texas' smaller communities attract many new residents for numerous reasons. Increased trade with Mexico and the recent oil boom have given vigorous life to southern Texas and areas along the coast. Generally speaking, what is good for Texas' larger cities has spilled over to other parts of the state. While the broad trend is for people to leave rural communities and head for the city, many still move to or stay in smaller communities. As rural and small communities grow, what are those factors that influence people's decision to move there, and what are the most important factors they use to determine where they live?

This section will look at the survey results from Texas REALTORS® about their last transaction to summarize the most important factors their clients considered when deciding where to live. Specifically, this section examines the behavior and attitudes of those who moved to rural or other smaller urban areas in Texas.[16] FIGURE 45 illustrates the percentage of responses that make up the rural and small community portion of the survey.

[16] This includes the city of El Paso, due to an insufficient survey response rate.

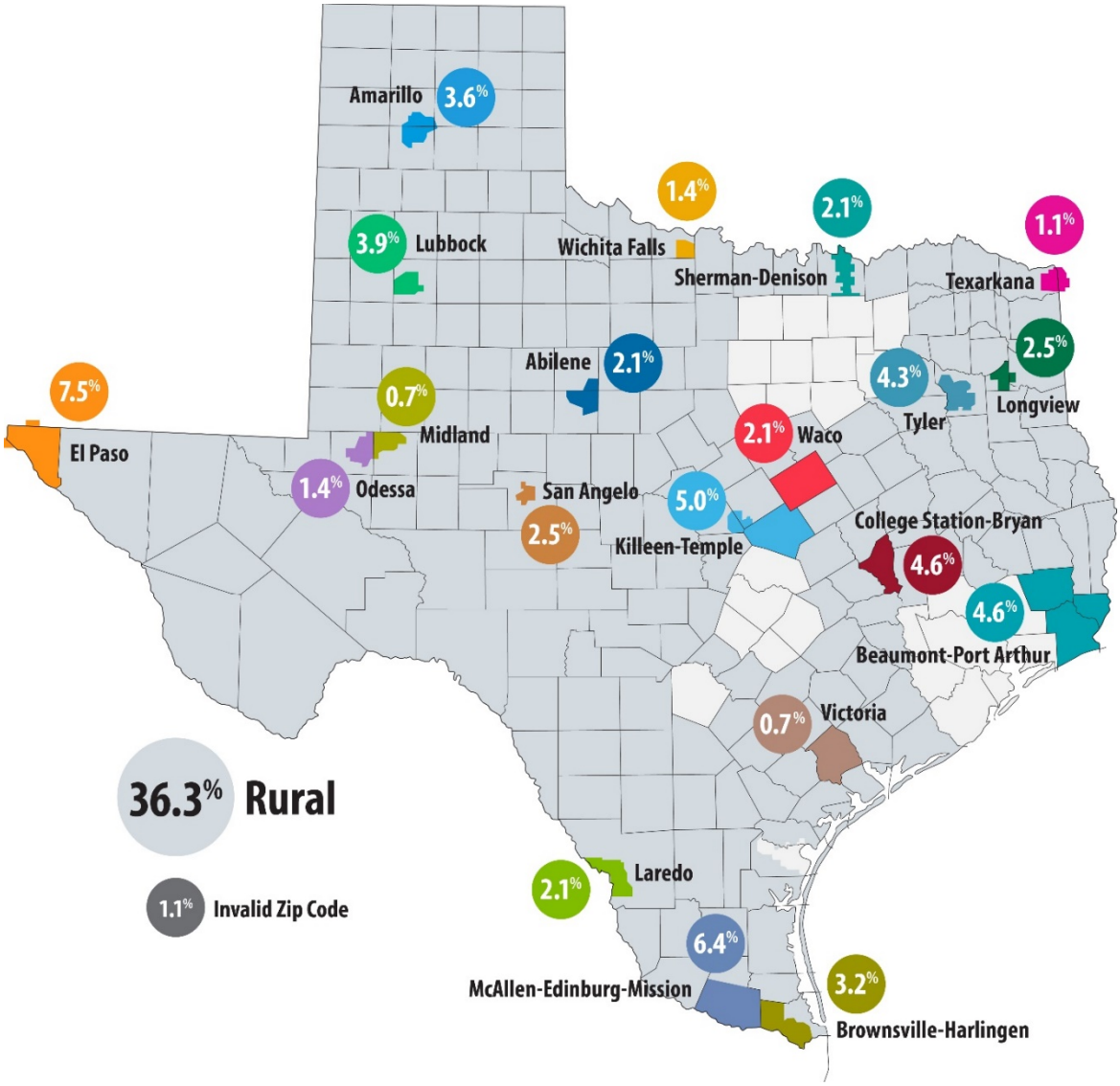

FIGURE 45 Responses from Rural and Other Small Urban Areas in the Survey.

More information about the questions asked and their results can be found in previous sections of this dissertation, APPENDIX B: TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE, and APPENDIX I: RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES.

Demographic Profile

Understand who lives in rural Texas and other small urban areas is difficult but crucial to ascertaining a deeper knowledge about how and why people choose to live where they

do in this area. As of 2015, the Texas State Demographer estimates approximately 8,900,000 people live in the rural parts of Texas and other small urban areas. This is significant as it represents a much larger portion of the state's population than any other individual metropolitan area discussed so far in this research.

Generational splits in rural and smaller urban areas differ significantly from other large metropolitan areas but match that of Corpus Christi and national trends rather closely. Baby boomers are again a significant proportion of the population, but are outnumbered by millennials and the youngest generation. While this is indicative of an aging population, younger generations should offset this trend in the coming decades. FIGURE 46 provides a demographic snapshot of rural Texas and the other smaller urban areas included in this survey (*85*,*86*,*87*,*88*).

This area's income distribution differs significantly from other large metropolitan areas in Texas. Rural and small town Texas has the highest proportion of households making less than $35,000 per year at 41 percent of the population. Additionally, these areas have a relatively high number of households in middle-income tiers, matching that of the state. These areas also have the fewest number of high-income households, deviating from state averages and less than that of Corpus Christi or San Antonio. A median income for this area could not be calculated.

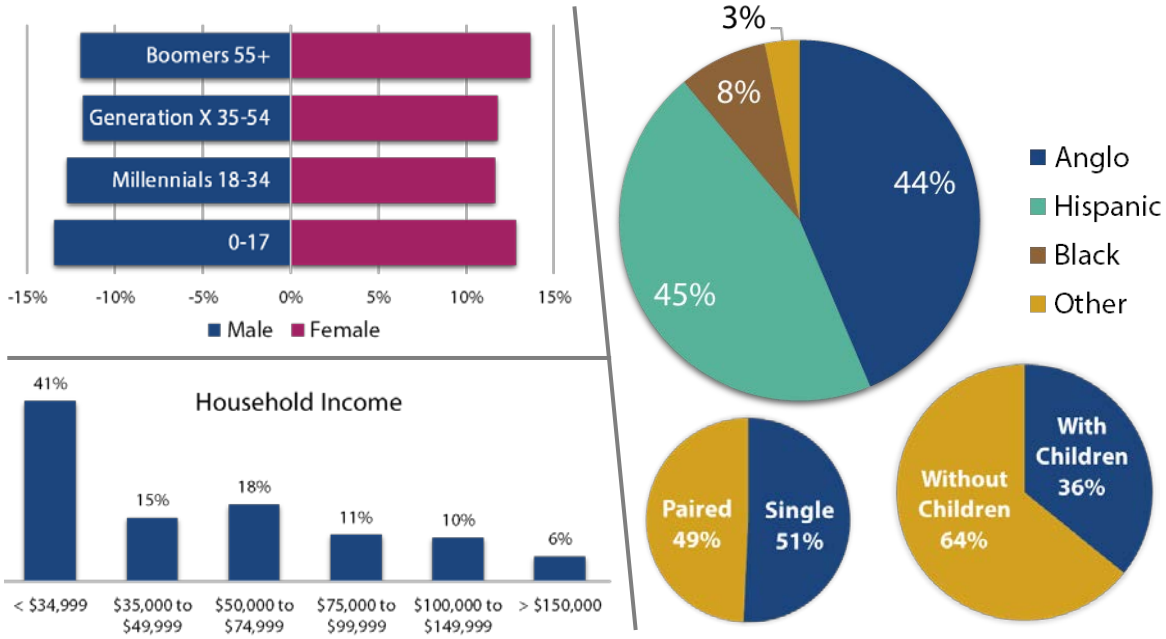

FIGURE 46 Rural and Other Urban Area Demographic Profile.

While race was not a factor calculated in this survey[17], knowing the racial composition of the area is still important. Rural Texas is split almost evenly between Anglo and a growing Hispanic populations, both comprising 89 percent of the total population. Slightly less than half of the population is married and slightly more than a third of households have children, closely matching the state average.

Housing Profile

The rural/smaller area profile relies heavily on rural residents all over the state but also includes smaller urban areas not previously discussed (FIGURE 45). Of those surveyed, respondents reported 93 percent of their last transactions were for clients purchasing a home. The remaining 7 percent either leased or rented (this represents one of the largest proportions to purchase a home).

[17] While information on race was collected in the survey, it was purposefully left out of the results in order to prevent discrimination in housing policy that might occur based on the results of this research.

Eighty-six percent of all home sales in the survey were less than $300,000; only 3 percent were for homes over $500,000, and none were over $1,000,000 (this includes ranch land homesteads as well). While distributions of actual sales prices are available for other urban areas, such a comparison was not available. However, the average actual price for this region could be calculated and similarly matches the survey's distribution (FIGURE 47). Rental properties under $1,500 per month represented just under two-thirds of rental/lease transactions. This represented the lowest home price and rental rate of any metropolitan region.

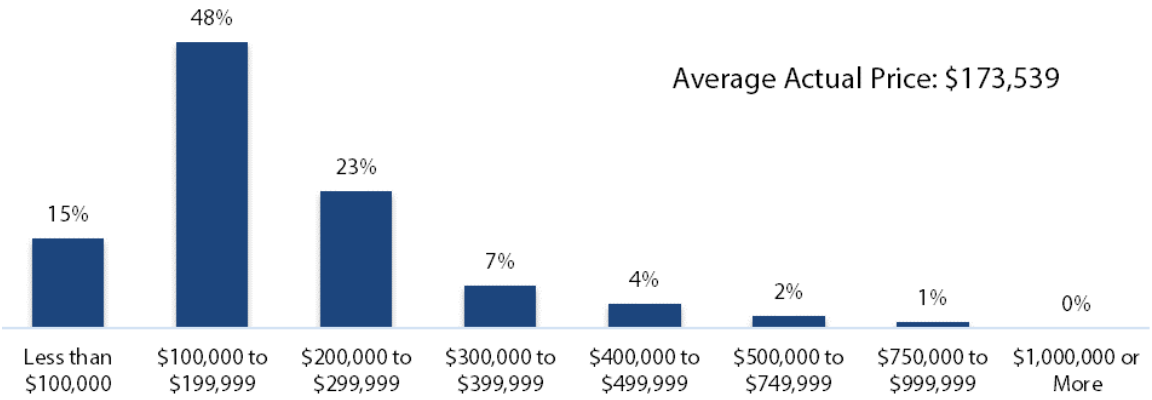

FIGURE 47 Survey Distribution of Rural and Small Urban Area Home Sales Prices.

Analysis Results

The purpose of this research sought to discover what factors in the housing location decision are important at three different levels (choosing the region, the neighborhood, and the specific home) and how important those factors are (ranking) by select demographic groups (single versus paired, generational groups, etc.). To do this, the survey results collected from respondents were first cleaned, coded, and aggregated (see the Data Processing section earlier) and separated into their respective urban areas.

In rural and smaller urban areas, there were a total of 281 completed and valid responses with 74 moving from outside the region to rural and smaller urban areas. Due to the nature of the data, the small sample size in some demographic categories, and a desire for a more conservative test, the nonparametric Mann-Whitney U test was used in cases were test assumptions were violated and a large enough sample size did not exist instead of standard t-tests. When testing income and generational groups, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) and Fisher's least significant difference (LSD) post-hoc test were used to distinguish which groups differed (and how they differed) from one another.

Choosing a Rural or Smaller Urban Area

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 48 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 56. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX I: RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES.

TABLE 56 Moving to a Rural/Other Area Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Cool factor or hipness					2.41	4.00	127.5	0.040
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.77	1.83	198.5	0.001	1.97	4.00	101.5	0.003
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3.31	1.87	223.5	0.005				
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**				
School quality	3.71	1.86	225.5	0.007				
Health reasons or natural disaster	1.76	2.93	267.5	0.019				

RURAL: Why Move to the Region?

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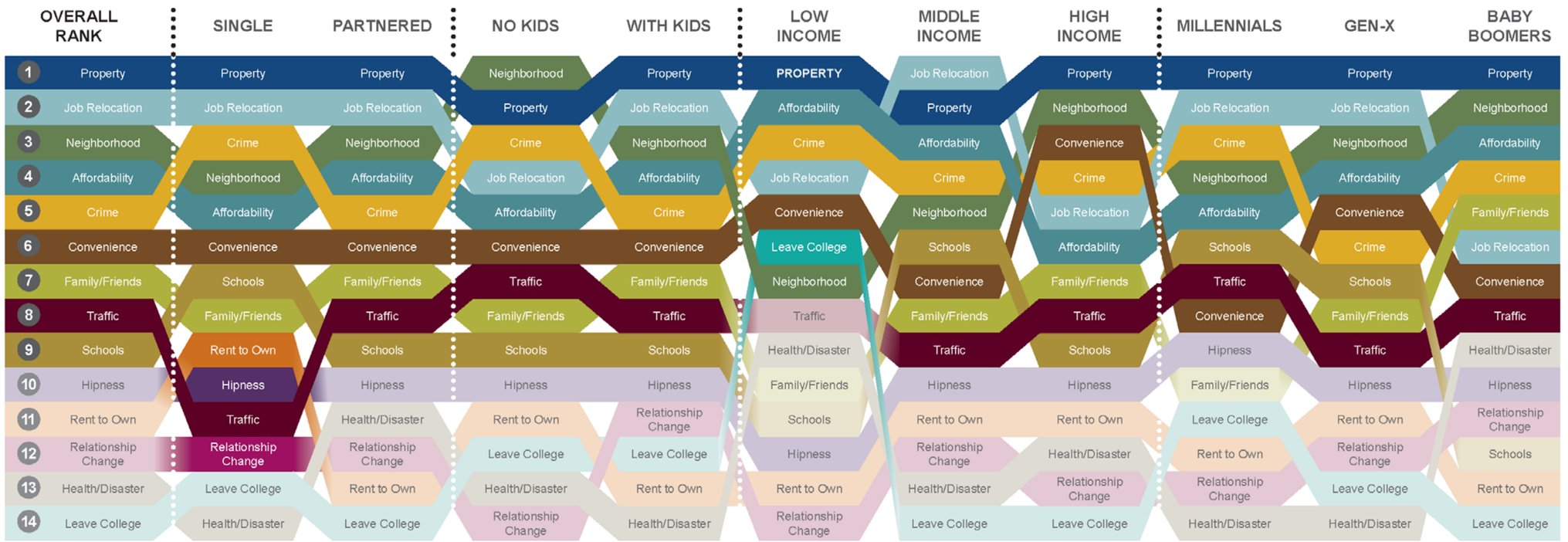

How to Read This Chart

The overall ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of this chart and corresponds with the tables in Appendix C through I. The chart shows how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

Property	Anything about the purchased property that may have contributed to the buyer's decision.
Neighborhood	The aesthetics and charm, reputation, or any amenities such as walking trails, street lights, water features, or parks.
Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 48 Rural: Why Move to the Region?

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups can be seen in TABLE 57 and TABLE 58. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences within the income group.

TABLE 57 Moving to a Rural/Other Area ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
Proximity to family and friends	2, 71	5.34	0.007
School quality	2, 70	8.06	0.001
Health reasons or natural disaster	2, 71	3.87	0.025

TABLE 58 Moving to a Rural/Other Area LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Generational Differences					
Proximity to family and friends	Millennials	2.21	Gen-X	3.85	0.024
			Baby Boomer	4.62	0.002
School quality	Baby Boomer	1.96	Millennials	3.57	0.032
			Gen-X	4.62	0.000
Health reasons or natural disaster	Baby Boomer	2.62	Millennials	1.43	0.019
			Gen-X	1.71	0.022

Choosing the Neighborhood

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 49 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 59. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX I: RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES.

RURAL: Why Choose that Neighborhood?

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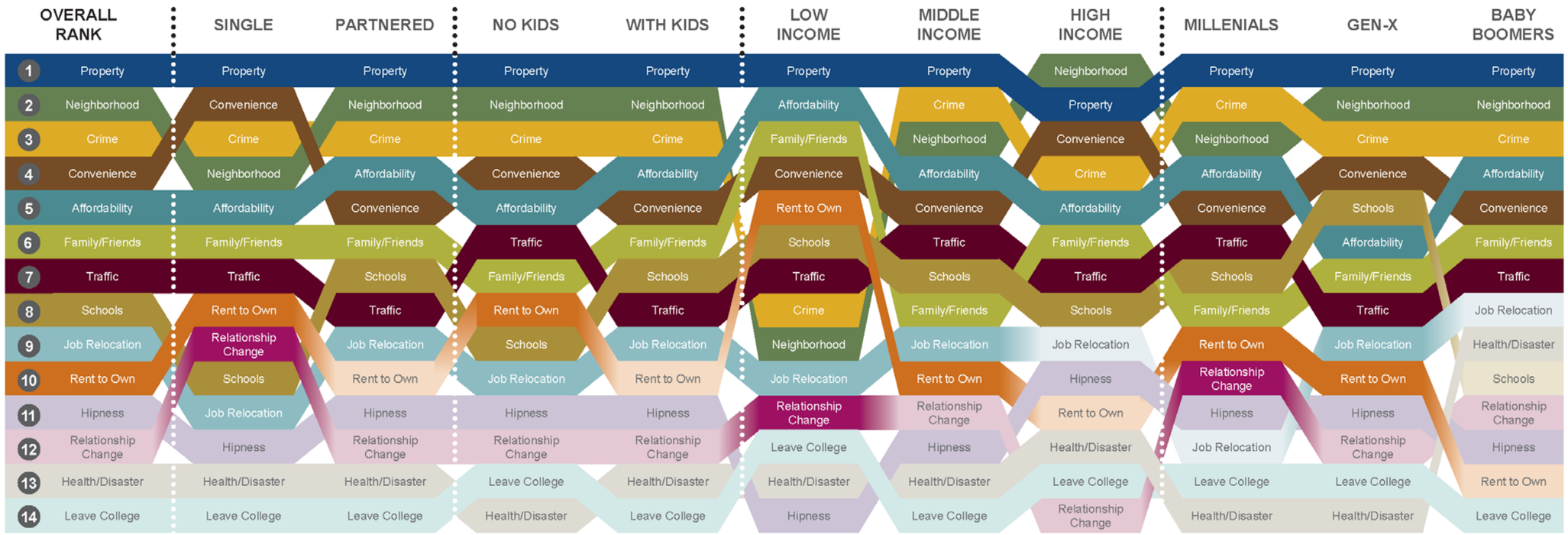

How to Read This Chart

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Convenience	Convenient access to services or amenities including groceries, extracurricular activities, banks, entertainment, etc.
Traffic	Any regard to transportation including traffic congestion and commute distance or time.
Schools	The quality and proximity of the local school.
Crime	The local crime rate or perception of safety.
Affordability	The home price, local taxes, utilities, and general cost of living.
Family/ Friends	The closeness of the property to family and friends.
"Hipness"	The cool factor or how desirable the neighborhood is perceived to be by buyers.
Job Relocation	Factors related to a new job, career change, or retirement.
Rent to Own	Transitioning from renting to owning but also transitioning from owning to renting.
Relationship Change	Change in relationship status or to establish one's own household.
Health/Disaster	Health concerns or relocation by a disaster.
Leave College	Leaving or attending college.

FIGURE 49 Rural: Why Choose That Neighborhood?

TABLE 59 Moving to a Rural/Other Area Neighborhood Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	No Kids	With Kids	U	Sig.
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4.78	4.09	4304.0	0.011				
School quality					3.22	3.86	7040.0	0.026
Transition from owner/ renter to renter/owner	3.82	2.83	4328.5	0.008	3.40	2.79	7111.5	0.028
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3.73	2.04	3130.0	0.000				
Health reasons or natural disaster	2.68	1.96	4417.0	0.008	2.38	2.01	7177.5	0.027
Attend or leave college	2.60	1.83	4346.0	0.002	2.39	1.89	7057.5	0.009
Factor (continued)	**Employed**	**Under-employed**	**U**	**Sig.**	**Own**	**Rent**	**U**	**Sig.**
School quality	3.85	2.34	2643.0	0.000				
Job relocation, career change, or retirement					3.02	4.25	1826.5	0.020
Cool factor or hipness					2.38	3.45	1724.5	0.007
Change in relationship status or establishment of household					2.34	3.35	1860.5	0.016
Attend or leave college					1.97	3.05	2028.0	0.044

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for generational groups and income groups can be seen in TABLE 60 and TABLE 61. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables.

TABLE 60 Moving to a Rural/Other Area Neighborhood ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3, 277	4.13	0.007
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	3, 277	6.22	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	3, 277	3.55	0.015

TABLE 60 Continued

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Generational Differences			
School quality	2, 239	17.49	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	2, 239	10.75	0.000
Cool factor or hipness	2, 239	3.35	0.037
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	2, 239	5.66	0.004
Attend or leave college	2, 239	4.48	0.012

TABLE 61 Moving to a Rural/Other Area Neighborhood LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	High Income	5.27	Low Income	3.40	0.002
			Middle Income	4.44	0.020
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	High Income	1.86	Low Income	3.80	0.004
			Middle Income	3.49	0.000
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	High Income	1.67	Low Income	3.07	0.016
			Middle Income	2.69	0.003
Generational Differences					
School quality	Baby Boomer	2.28	Millennials	4.01	0.000
			Gen-X	4.17	0.000
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	Millennials	3.84	Gen-X	3.13	0.045
			Baby Boomer	2.06	0.000
	Gen-X	3.13	Baby Boomer	2.06	0.003
Cool factor or hipness	Millennials	2.86	Baby Boomer	2.07	0.100
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	Millennials	3.13	Gen-X	2.25	0.005
			Baby Boomer	2.10	0.003
Attend or leave college	Baby Boomer	1.47	Millennials	2.21	0.015
			Gen-X	2.25	0.006

Choosing the House

The results of the ranking of importance (factors tested that contained a mean higher than 3 on a seven-point scale) can be seen in FIGURE 50 (please refer to the How to Read the Ranking Charts section to interpret the figure).

RURAL: Why Choose that House?

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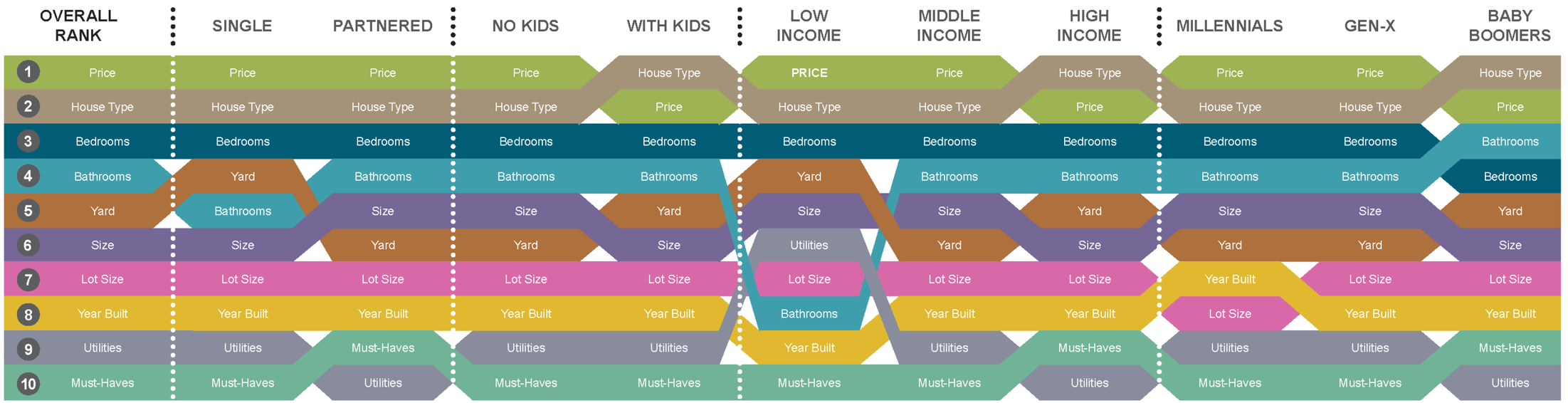

How to Read This Chart

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Factors that were not important (scores less than three on a seven-point scale) in the decision-making process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, the order in which they are ranked is still important. Those factors that are most important in the decision are indicated in bold at the top.

Chart Key — The following represents how each factor is defined in the survey:

- **Price** — Final price of the home.
- **House Type** — Types such as single-family detached, condominiums, townhouses, multifamily, etc.
- **Bedrooms** — The number of bedrooms.
- **Bathrooms** — The number of bathrooms.
- **Size** — The square footage of the home.
- **Lot Size** — The property lot size or acreage.
- **Yard** — The presence or absence of a yard.
- **Year Built** — The year the property was built or renovated.
- **Utilities** — The average cost of utilities.
- **Must-Haves** — The presence of a particular upgrade feature the buyer could not live without.

FIGURE 50 Rural: Why Choose That House?

The results of the statistical tests for a significant difference between dichotomous demographic groups can be seen in TABLE 62. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in this table. A complete listing of means can be found in APPENDIX I: RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES.

TABLE 62 Choosing a Home in a Rural/Other Area Test Results

Factor	Singles	Partnered	U	Sig.	Own	Rent	U	Sig.
Acreage and/or lot size					4.65	3.85	1693.5	0.009
Cost of utilities	4.38	3.80	4352.5	0.014				

The results of the ANOVA (or equivalent) test for income groups can be seen in TABLE 63 and TABLE 64. Only the factors that were statistically significant are listed in these tables. There were no significant differences within the generational group.

TABLE 63 Choosing a Home in a Rural/Other Area ANOVA Results

Factor	df	F	Sig.
Income Differences			
Price	3, 277	2.98	0.032
Cost of utilities	3, 277	4.73	0.003

TABLE 64 Choosing a Home in a Rural/Other Area LSD Post Hoc Results

Factor	Group	Mean	Group	Mean	Sig.
Income Differences					
Price	High Income	5.18	Low Income	6.33	0.007
			Middle Income	5.74	0.030
Cost of utilities	High Income	3.18	Low Income	4.27	0.028
			Middle Income	4.23	0.000

How to Read the Ranking Charts

The ranking of factors for all survey respondents appears on the left side of the three ranking charts in this section and their corresponding tables in APPENDIX I: RURAL &

OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES. The ranking charts show how, for any particular factor, the importance changes for each demographic group from left to right across the table. When reading the ranking chart, compare demographics within a category (e.g., income levels), against the overall raking, or between categories.

Factors that were not important (scores less than 3 on a seven-point scale) in the decision process for any demographic group are faded in color near the bottom. While some factors may not be statistically important, their rank order is still important.

The word *significant* or its variations represent survey score means that are statistically different from one demographic group to its comparison group.

Rural/Smaller Areas versus Texas

Choosing a Rural or Smaller Urban Area

People choosing to live in rural or smaller Texas communities are attracted to the region for the same reasons as other Texans—property characteristics, relocating for a job, and neighborhood reputation and area aesthetics. The one distinguishing factor that separates rural residents from those living in larger cities is affordability. The affordability of their area ranked significantly higher for rural residents than any other region.

Choosing a Neighborhood

Preferences and purchasing criteria in rural areas closely match that of the largest cities, including Houston and Dallas-Fort Worth. Rural residents place a higher importance on the property, neighborhood reputation and aesthetics, crime rates, and nearness to friends, just like residents choosing a neighborhood in the largest areas. However, the importance given to traffic and travel times in choosing a neighborhood is significantly lower than in all but one area (Corpus Christi).

Selecting the Right House

Rural residents follow the state trend when selecting a specific property, giving primary importance to price, the type of house, and the number of bedrooms. However, rural

residents depart from the rest of Texas by placing more importance on the number of bathrooms versus the size of the house. Home size is more closely grouped with lot size.

Why Move to Rural Texas or Smaller Urban Areas?

Respondents were first asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to rural or other smaller urban areas. This question was only asked if the respondents indicated their client moved from out of state or from another metropolitan area. All the ranked factors in this section are under this context.

Rural Texans Overall

Like other metropolitan areas, the primary element rated as attracting people to the region is the property itself. However, in most urban areas, it does not make sense that someone would move to a city for a specific property (and thus this is assumed to be evidence of the importance of the house in the overall decision-making process). However, at the rural level, this ranking does make sense. Moving to a specific rural property from another region could reasonably be the primary factor.

Job relocation and elements describing the region's neighborhoods fall closely behind. However, rural residents place a significantly higher importance on the area's affordability (rural and smaller towns are traditionally inexpensive). Traffic or travel time concerns and the convenience of the area rank noticeably lower in importance.

Singles versus Couples

While single and coupled buyers rank factors closely to one another (both citing the appeal of property types and relocating for a job as the top two choices), singles place a higher importance on the crime rate for the area and school quality of the region. The high rank of schools by singles could reflect a higher number of single parents or retirees without children in rural and small urban areas.

Singles are also significantly more likely than couples to move to a rural area or smaller town due to a change in their relationship status or simply out of a desire to transition

from renting to owning. This makes sense when paired with the general affordability of rural areas.

Children versus No Children

While there are no statistical differences in importance factors for those with children and those without, those without children rank these factors very differently. Buyers without children rank the region's neighborhood quality and aesthetics as the primary deciding factor for moving to a rural or smaller urban area, bumping the impact of a job relocation much lower on the list. This could likely be a reflection of retirees or high-income buyers moving to the area. Traffic concerns, while still ranking at the bottom of the list, are higher for those without children than for those with children.

Income Considerations

No statistical differences could be seen between income groups, though their rankings of importance differ a lot and reveal a few trends. As income increases, the importance placed on affordability (not surprisingly) decreases, while the importance given to the region's aesthetics and reputation and nearness to family and friends increases.

Low-income buyers find the property itself very important in the decision to move to the areas, followed closely by the area's affordability. The quality of the region's neighborhoods drops to the lowest importance ranking, and traffic concerns are not important at all (the only regional survey where this occurred). Also notable is that low-income buyers are likely to move to the region due to leaving college and establishing a household for the first time.

High-income buyers are noticeably more likely to move to the area for the property itself rather than more practical concerns, ranking job relocation, traffic, and school quality much lower than the property, area neighborhood quality, and the region's convenience.

Middle-income buyers rank moving to the area due to job relocation as most important, with a higher concern for school quality than their high- and low-income peers. Like

low-income buyers, middle-income buyers also rate the region's neighborhood quality and convenience much lower.

Generational Divides

Generational differences are most noticeably pronounced in choosing to move to a rural area. The properties available attract all three generations, and as buyers age, the importance of the region's aesthetics and reputation, the area's affordability, and nearness to family and friends increases.

Baby boomers do not give any importance to school quality and are much more likely to move to the area for health reasons. They rank affordability and nearness to friends and family more highly than younger buyers.

Millennials, on the other hand, are significantly less concerned about nearness to family and friends (not important at all) and rank the convenience of the region low. However, they rank traffic and travel time concerns and school quality higher than any other group.

Generation X most noticeably ranks the region's convenience higher than millennials or baby boomers, but gives crime concerns much lower importance than other generations.

Additional Findings

Fully employed buyers rank school quality significantly higher than underemployed buyers in choosing to live in a rural area. Underemployed workers are significantly more likely to move due to health issues or a natural disaster.

Why Choose That Neighborhood?

Respondents were next asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the particular neighborhood within a smaller urban area or rural area (if it had one). This question was asked of all respondents regardless of where their clients moved. The ranked factors in this section reveal the importance when choosing a neighborhood instead of a region.

Rural Texans Overall

For most urban areas surveyed, choosing a specific neighborhood garners the most interest. However, in rural areas, formal neighborhoods are less prominent (or may not exist) and may not play highly in the location decision. But for those areas that do and other small urban areas, choosing the right neighborhood can be critical. Overall, rural Texans are drawn to a specific neighborhood due to the property they ended up purchasing. However, the neighborhood aesthetics and reputation, crime rate, convenience of the area, and affordability follow closely in importance. After these factors, buyers do not consider much else as that important in choosing a neighborhood.

Singles versus Couples

Both singles and couples value the property itself. While couples value the neighborhood aesthetics, singles significantly value convenience, ranking it second and crime third. Singles also rank transitioning from renting to owning or a change in relationship significantly more important in the neighborhood selection process over couples.

However, couples tend to value schools and school quality higher than singles, ranking this much higher. Couples also tend to give slightly more importance to affordability.

Children versus No Children

Both buyers with and without children share the three most important factors in selecting a neighborhood: the property itself, the neighborhood's reputation and aesthetics, and the local crime rate. Buyers with children mirror couples in rankings exactly, placing a higher importance on neighborhood reputation, aesthetics, and amenities than other considerations. Not surprisingly, they also give a significantly higher importance to school quality than those without children.

Buyers without children instead place a higher importance on things such as the convenience of the neighborhood and traffic or travel time concerns than those with children. They also place a higher importance on transitioning from renting to owning.

Income Considerations

Low-income buyers rank the property itself first and then place a higher importance on affordability and nearness to friends and family than any other group. The latter likely stems from a need for a strong support system for their family. These buyers also pay close attention to school quality while viewing crime and neighborhood aesthetics and amenities with very low importance. They view transitioning from renting to owning as a priority.

Middle-income buyers instead view crime as an extremely important factor in deciding in which neighborhood to live, ranking it second below the property itself. These buyers are also slightly more sensitive to traffic concerns than other income groups.

High-income buyers give significantly higher importance to the neighborhood aesthetics, reputation, and amenities than any other group, placing it higher than the property itself (the only demographic to do so in this region). These buyers also give more importance to the convenience of the neighborhood than other income groups.

Generational Divides

When comparing generational differences, a few key factors distinguish one group from another. For example, generation X places a significantly higher importance on school quality than baby boomers (who do not view it as important at all) and rank it higher than millennials.

Millennials, on the other hand, place significantly more importance on transitioning from renting to owning and establishing a household and rank traffic concerns lower than baby boomers. While nearness to family and friends is of near equal importance to these two generations, baby boomers rank this as more important than millennials.

Additional Findings

For those looking to purchase in a rural or small town area, the hipness of the area matters very little when choosing a neighborhood. I guess cows aren’t that cool.

Why Choose That Specific Home?

Respondents were finally asked to rank factors that influenced their client's decision to move to the specific house they chose. This question takes a closer look at those factors that place the property at or near the top of every demographic. What about that house made rural and small-town Texans weigh all other factors much lower in their location decision?

Rural Texans Overall

The two most important factors for rural and small town buyers in choosing a home are price and the type of property. As seen previously, affordability ranks highly with these buyers, so it should not be surprising price is most important. House type (detached house, apartment, mobile home, ranch, etc.) also matters because there are several types to choose from in this area.

These buyers also highly rank the basic qualities of the house (number of bedrooms and bathrooms) over size, both in terms of square footage and acreage. Rural buyers also do not rank must-have upgrades to the home as important as other factors (though it is more important than for many other cities).

Singles versus Couples

While there are few differences between single buyers and couples (both sharing the three most important factors), couples place a significantly lower importance on the cost of utilities than singles. Singles, however, put a much higher importance on whether or not their home has a yard than couples.

Children versus No Children

While there are no significant differences between those with children and those without children, buyers with children rank the type of house higher than price, differing from buyers without children. This likely indicates a fundamental concern for choosing the right property for their family, trading this off with price.

Buyers with children also rank the presence of a yard higher than those without children. Conversely, buyers without children are more interested in their home's square footage than dealing with a yard.

Income Considerations

First, for all three income brackets, the top three factors are relatively the same. While middle- and high-income buyers are relatively similar, both middle- and low-income buyers place a significantly higher importance on cost-of-living concerns, including both price and the cost of utilities. Low-income buyers even rate price as the overriding factor above all else that determines which home they choose.

Low-income buyers also rank the presence of a yard much higher than other income groups, nearly tying with the number of bedrooms. This contrasts a significant disinterest in the number of bathrooms, showing a willingness to compromise on that for lower utilities, a larger home, and a yard.

Generational Divides

Unlike all other metropolitan area, there are no significant differences between generations in factors for selecting a specific home. However, there are some subtle differences. For example, baby boomers rank the type of house slightly higher than price as generation X and millennials do. Millennials and generation X do seem to be more price conscious, ranking cost-of-living factors higher than baby boomers.

Additional Findings

Those looking to buy a home are significantly more interested in the acreage or lot size than those looking to rent or lease.

Other Reasons

The survey gave respondents the opportunity to supply any other reasons that may have trumped everything else or factored greatly into their buyer's decision to move where they did. Only 30 percent of respondents commented, but their comments are revealing.

Rural and small-town respondents cite something specific to the house as the final deciding factor for their client—usually having to do with a particular upgrade (e.g., granite countertops, a larger garage, pool, or the view) or the condition of the home (whether it was new construction with custom upgrades, newly renovated, or prime for remodeling) (FIGURE 51). Even though must-have upgrades usually rank near the bottom in the overall rank of importance, this factor appears to be the one that sold the buyer. The rural/small town area has the largest share of home-specific reasons of any other metropolitan area. This is likely due to rural properties having very specific elements that buyers are looking for when purchasing a home (e.g., a barn, shop, or garage building—all cited several times by respondents).

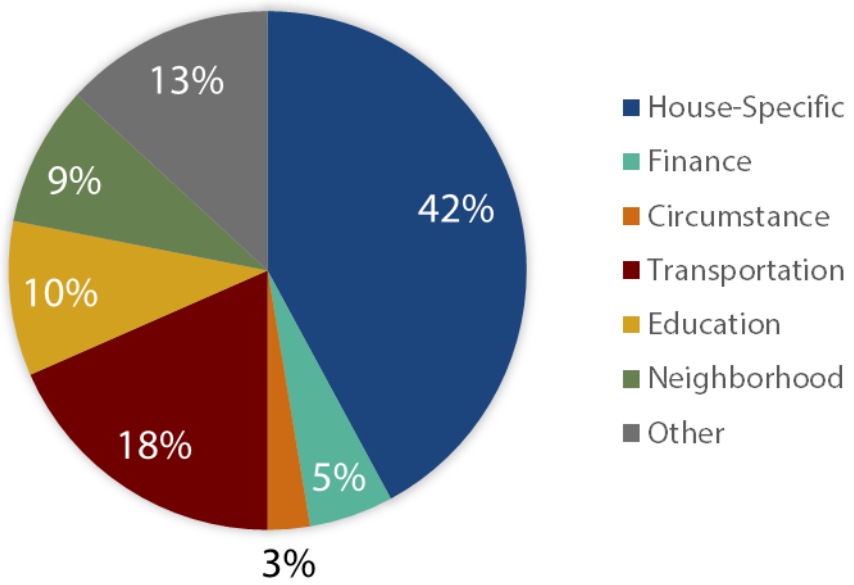

FIGURE 51 Open Responses Given for Rural and Other Smaller Urban Areas.

Transportation concerns contribute less than one-fifth of those other reasons—among the lowest measured in the survey. Though respondents said many of their clients wanted to be close to either work, family, friends, or nearby amenities and entertainment options, transportation concerns as a whole score low in importance across groups. In many cases

noted by respondents, buyers initially wanted to balance a work commute with other factors, such as nearness to family, a spouse's work commute, or the distance between work and their children's school. However, the results suggest that while this was initially important to the client, other factors pushed transportation concerns lower on the list—factors such as price, the neighborhood, convenience, crime rate, and ultimately the property itself. While traffic and travel times are important to buyers in rural and small towns, it does not appear to be a primary concern for most.

REALTOR® PROFILE

The survey collected information about the survey respondents, specifically what their specialty is, where they work, and how long they have been a licensed REALTOR®.

Specialty

Forty percent of all respondents acknowledged they specialized in some area, such as:

- Client focused, which includes the type of client (e.g., first-time homebuyers or builders), client demographics (e.g., Hispanic clients or underserved populations), or client characteristics (e.g., military, teachers, single parents with children, or retirees).
- Property focused, which includes home value ranges, property types (e.g., farm and ranch, or townhouses), and property characteristics (e.g., affordable housing, luxury, or distressed properties).
- Specialized real estate services, which includes relocations, leasing, foreclosures, rental and property management, or broker services, to name a few.

FIGURE 52 shows the distribution of these specialties.

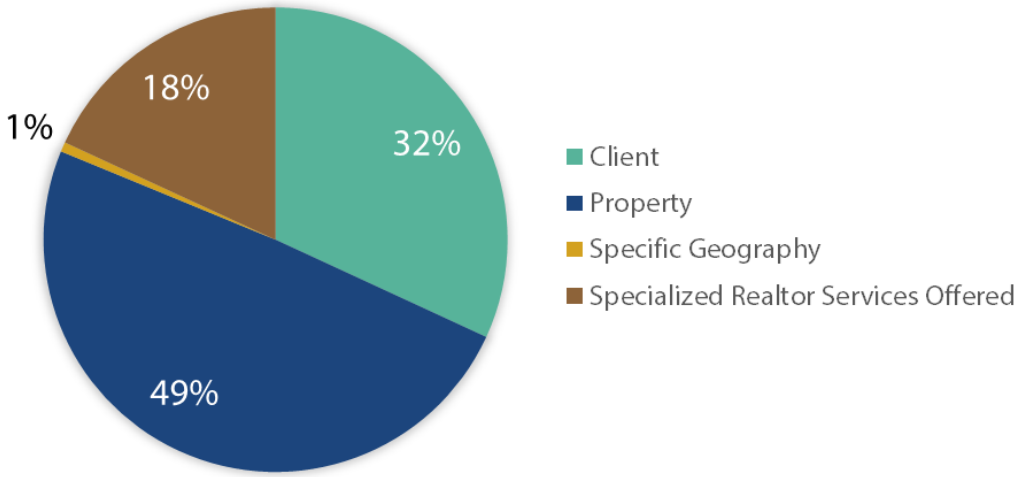

FIGURE 52 REALTOR® Specializations.

Work Location

A couple respondents also noted that they specialized in a specific geographical area. However, most REALTORS® in the state will likely only practice where they are physically located. Based on other information from the survey, a distribution was created by metropolitan area where respondents typically work compared to the estimated distribution of population in 2015 (FIGURE 53) (*91*).

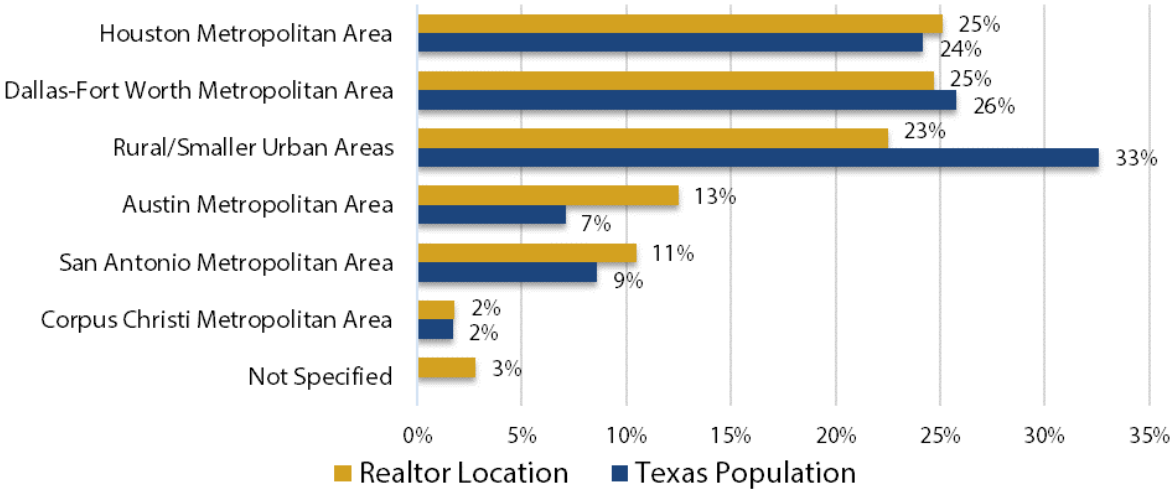

FIGURE 53 Where Survey Respondents Work Compared to Texas Population.

The four largest metropolitan areas account for approximately 73 percent of all survey respondents. The remaining respondents worked predominantly in rural or smaller urban areas, in no specific area, or across multiple regions in the state. This matches well with the distribution of the Texas population, noting that the Austin and San Antonio areas may have been under sampled compared to rural and other smaller urban areas. However, this oversampling in the rural region likely ensured a more accurate picture of buyer preference for the region.

Tenure as a REALTOR®

Half of all the survey respondents have been licensed for more than 10 years, with nearly a third being licensed for more than 16 years (FIGURE 54). The average tenure for holding a real estate license in Texas by survey respondents is 12 years. This diverse mix of tenure, specialization, and location by survey respondents indicates a healthy mix of responses.

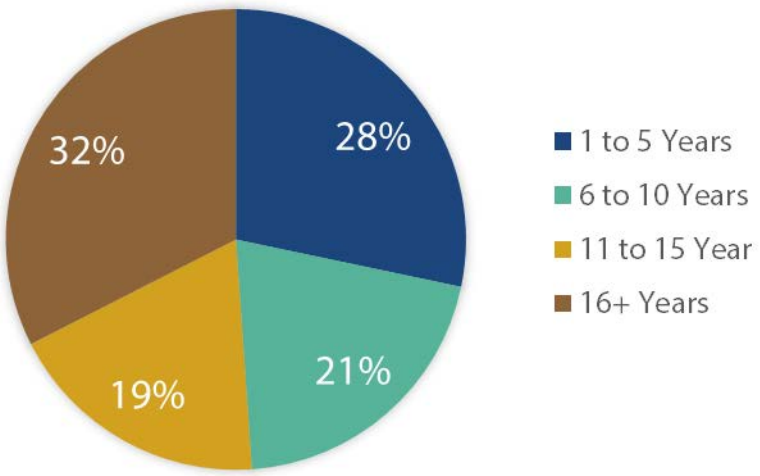

FIGURE 54 Length of Time Respondents Have Been Licensed in Texas.

CONCLUSIONS

While the results of this survey have opened a broad window into the decision-making process of Texans, the findings have also posited many new questions that now require answering. While we can see the relative importance of several factors, the biggest remaining questions are "why?" and "when?" Why are certain factors more important than others for different groups of people in different cities? When are certain factors important? One can likely make an accurate guess to some of the peculiarities (such as "why do low-income buyers rate nearness to family and friends so important?"). However, there are other questions that prove to be much more difficult to assess.

Not surprisingly, the property is the focal point of the location decision at every level. It appears that buyers would likely compromise on just about any factor if they found the right home. But after the property, the neighborhood—its quality of design, reputation, amenities, aesthetic value, and convenience—rules over other factors, including school quality, affordability, and traffic concerns. While these other factors are important, they generally do not appear to be deciding factors.

Respondent comments have indicated that while traffic concerns initially may have been a factor in selecting the area of town in which to look, it diminishes in importance (or gets moved down the list) when other neighborhood and house-specific factors begin to be considered. It may be that traffic concerns and other broader factors such as crime rates, proximity to family, and school quality form a soft boundary by which people begin their search. However, as the search progresses, these boundaries are widened as multiple houses become available home options.

Once the buyer finds the right type of house at the right price, other more practical concerns come into play: does it have what the buyer ultimately needs? Does it have the right number of bedrooms, square footage, or type and size of yard?

Trends from the survey, however, did reveal that traffic and transportation concerns are generally more important at the neighborhood level, outplaying affordability, school

quality, and proximity to friends and family. While traffic does not appear to deter people from moving to a new urban area, bad traffic and long travel times do appear to deter buyers from certain neighborhoods if other, more important factors are accommodated. This suggests more-accessible neighborhoods by any transportation mode are more desirable to buyers. Policy makers may wish to use this information to adjust or target spending on transportation infrastructure or various mobility options.

Stated from a different perspective, a buyer may initially begin his or her search for a new home by narrowing down neighborhoods using broad generalizations. What areas have low crime rates? What areas are desirable, aesthetically noteworthy, and of good rapport? What areas are reasonably close to work and/or school? At this stage in the process, transportation concerns exert the largest influence on the housing location decision. Once a buyer has progressed through the home search and settled on two or three house options in different locations, the survey results suggest that he or she will make the final decision first based on house-specific factors. If all houses offer equal benefits, he or she will next consider the neighborhood's reputation, amenities, and aesthetics, followed by safety concerns or other neighborhood convenience factors. Transportation considerations will likely not be the final deciding factor or the most important factor in his or her decision.

Ultimately, the housing location decision represents a series of trade-offs and compromises. This complex decision is different for everyone, but with greater information about it, more can be done to offer buyers what they want and where they want it, making wise public investment choices in the process. And understanding even a small portion of this decision can help developers, policy makers, professionals and others offer buyers the quality options they are looking for. Researchers could follow up this survey effort with additional efforts examining roadway corridors in each urban area based on the demographic, economic, and other information paired with these survey results.

Recommendations

This research has shown that there are numerous factors involved in the housing location decision and that transportation and traffic concerns are not the most important factor in this process. This is not to understate its importance, especially towards the beginning of the decision. However, there needs to be a general recognition that people choose to live where they do for many factors, any of which, if altered properly, could have dramatic impacts on how Texas cities function. Therefore, the following recommendations provide possible action that should be considered or studied to take advantage of the information from this research.

For Policy Makers

The primary outcome from this research provides a view of a broader paradigm that has not been recognized at the policy level. This new paradigm shows that while direct policy forces will impact an area like transportation, housing, safety, or education, these areas do not exist within a vacuum. Each of these (and others) impacts the other, specifically here transportation is impacted by other options and factors in the housing location decision. Improvements in one area will likely have an impact on another that may not have been achievable through direct intervention. For example, improving the quality and types of housing in an area, the education quality, and a neighborhood's aesthetic may have a substantial impact on the types and timing of transportation infrastructure needed. A benefit to one of these other areas may have a spill-over synergistic effect that delays or eliminates the need for additional transportation improvement.

A paradigm shift should occur that transitions from a siloed approach to policy and spending to a broader, more holistic approach. This will require policy makers to examine other areas for potential impacts other than transportation when making broad transportation decisions or setting priorities. The results of this research can serve as a base for that consideration.

For Planners and Practitioners

While policy makers may set many high-level priorities and make large scale funding decisions, planners and practitioners can more proactively address the holistic nature of the housing location decision. Planners can use the information provided by this research to adjust comprehensive plans and regulation to incorporate elements that impact the housing location choice to maximize development efficiency. This can be achieved through using tools that promote high-quality housing design, landscaping and streetscaping in neighborhoods, a rich and diverse set of land uses near major housing centers, aesthetic design that reduces the perception of crime, or opportunities that keep areas affordable or all demographic groups.

All this can and should be done in addition to providing walkable and bikeable spaces, using and encouraging transportation demand management and travel options, and eliminating existing bottlenecks through traffic management and system modification strategies. These strategies should be carefully coordinated with other land use planning strategies and used in an appropriate context.

For Transportation Modelers

While this research opened with a short critique of transportation modeling, the results of the survey show that there are numerous factors that could be included in the transportation modeling process to show where people are likely to select a home. With improvements in data quality and availability, many of these factors can be integrated directly without use of a proxy variable or estimation.

Improvements in this process will also give policy makers and planning practitioners the ability to proactively encourage improvements in certain factors to attracted residents to areas with underused infrastructure. This would improve the efficiency by which transportation funds are spent, reducing the need for reactionary transportation infrastructure development.

Research Limitations

Limitations for any survey will vary significantly based upon the questions asked, the nature of the population and the sample surveyed, the method of analysis, and the very conceptual framework the effort was built upon in the first place. Biases can be introduced into almost every stage, from developing the conceptual framework, building the survey, wording the questions and possible responses, coding qualitative data, and dealing with outliers, to name a few.

Random Sampling, Sample Size, and Validity

In survey research, ensuring the completed samples are truly random and representative of the population as a whole is likely the largest limitation. While the steps discussed earlier in the RESEARCH METHODOLOGY section can help ensure a random sample, it still exists as a major limitation, especially when considering the source of the contact information and survey mode. The contact information may be skewed towards a certain type of group (*64*).

Questions of internal validity (i.e., the establishment of a causal relationship between two variables) are difficult to settle in survey research due to the lack of experimental and control groups. Extra pressure is placed on the researcher to prove that the respondents in the sample are first representative of the population at large and second, that the groups being considered in the survey are relatively equal. This is usually mitigated by increasing sample size. The analysis, however, must be able to rule out, with some certainty, potential confounding variables or attributes (*92*).

This research also did not take into account residential real estate transactions that were for rental or lease units or that did not use a REALTOR—likely those that were internal to a family or that were for sale by owner. This means that a certain measure of sampling error was built into the research design from the beginning, reducing the external validity of the survey results (meaning they may not apply as well to the real world).

Questions and Measurement Error

Even though the questions in this survey instrument were well-vetted by experts in multiple fields and tested by a series of professionals and non-professionals alike, there is a low possibility that the questions in the survey—specifically concerning the location choice—may not have precisely measured what the research desired to measure. The structure of the question or the wording of the possible responses may have caused some confusion for respondents, especially with subtle differences between the region and neighborhood location questions, as they had the same variables.

This would explain why the property itself ranked highly in the "why move to the region" question over something more reasonable like due to a job relocation or career change. Logically, it would not make sense for someone to move across the country due to a specific property. However, since many of those moving into Texas were from states with much higher real estate prices, that could be a valid response as home buyers seek to upgrade their standard of living and take advantage of equity gained in other markets.

Lost Incomplete Responses

There were a total of 1,912 surveys begun by respondents, but only 1,325 were completed and considered valid for analysis. However, those incomplete survey responses could still provide valuable information and bolster sample size numbers needed to cull more detailed information about the home buying decision.

However, these 587 partial responses were lost due to a malfunction with the survey distribution tool, LimeSurvey. Upon completion of the survey, as the results were being prepared for analysis by the software program, the program failed, causing an error that permanently deleted all partial responses. The only thing that is knowable after the deletion is the number of partially-completed surveys from a summary page.

One aspect to note about a potential flaw in the survey is the number of partially-completed surveys. While unknown, this large number could indicate:

1. A malfunction in the survey, causing respondents to restart the survey.
2. Confusion about one of the early questions, also causing respondents to restart the survey.
3. The survey was too long, causing respondents to lose interest altogether.
4. Some other reason not readily apparent.

Potential Bias Introduced by REALTORS®

Because this survey is using REALTORS® as a proxy for actual home buyers, a certain level of bias could have been introduced into the survey results. This could have come in the form of some sort of professional bias, meaning that since they are professionals in this field, they ultimately *know better* than the home buyer. This could have promoted a bias towards factors that are personal to the REALTOR® or trending in the real estate industry at the time of the survey.

The very experience of a REALTOR® may also bias the results of the survey, either by clouding the memory of what the last client looked for (as many REALTORS® juggle multiple clients at one time) or by averaging out client needs over time in their minds. In this case, the busier and more experienced the professional (factors that indicate a professional who is good at their job), the higher the likelihood of bias in some form.

This also questions whether or not REALTORS® in the state are a suitable proxy at all for home buyers. While this is a notable concern, the very issues that may raise question about their suitability, most notably knowing better than the home owner, may also be a strength to argue for their use. As stated earlier, REALTORS® are trained to see through the emotional decision and are legally and ethically bound to work in their clients' best wishes. Therefore, while this could be a substantial risk and limitation to the research, overall this limitation should be mitigated to only a negligible concern as sample sizes increase.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

Research Compliance and Biosafety

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

DATE: April 24, 2015

MEMORANDUM

TO: Philip Lasley
TAMU - Texas A&M University - Not Specified

FROM: Dr. James Fluckey
Chair
Institutional Review Board

SUBJECT: Expedited Approval – Initial Review

Study Number: IRB2015-0185D

Title: Relationship Between Congestion and Factors Affecting Housing Choice

Approval Date: 04/24/2015

Continuing Review Due: 03/15/2016

Expiration Date: 04/15/2016

Documents Reviewed and Approved:

Title	Version Number	Version Date	Outcome
Web Information Sheet	Version 2.0	04/22/2015	Approved
Letter of Cooperation from Texas Association of Realtors	Version 1.0	04/22/2015	Approved
survey question ideas	Version 1.0	04/10/2015	Approved
recruitment email	Version 1.0	04/10/2015	Approved
Lomax-Lasley - 33 - Housing Choice - Work Plan	Version 1.0	03/16/2015	Approved

Document of Consent: Waiver approved under 45 CFR 46.117 (c) 1 or 2/ 21 CFR 56.109 (c)1

This research project has been approved. As principal investigator, you assume the following responsibilities:

1. **Continuing Review:** The protocol must be renewed by the expiration date in order to continue with the research project. A Continuing Review application along with required documents must be submitted by the continuing review deadline. Failure to do so may result in processing delays, study termination, and/or loss of funding.
2. **Completion Report:** Upon completion of the research project (including data analysis and final written papers), a Completion Report must be submitted to the IRB.
3. **Unanticipated Problems and Adverse Events:** Unanticipated problems and adverse events must be reported to the IRB immediately.
4. **Reports of Potential Non-compliance:** Potential non-compliance, including deviations from protocol and violations, must be reported to the IRB office immediately.
5. **Amendments:** Changes to the protocol must be requested by submitting an Amendment to the IRB for review. The Amendment must be approved by the IRB before being implemented.

750 Agronomy Road, Suite 2701
1186 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-1186
Tel. 979.458.1467 Fax. 979.862.3176
http://rcb.tamu.edu

APPENDIX B

TEXAS REALTORS® SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

The Texas A&M Transportation Institute (TTI) Policy Research Center is conducting research on the motivations and factors that influence a person's housing location decision in Texas. As a REALTOR®, your unique insight into this decision-making process will enable researchers, planners, and policy makers to better understand how factors in Texas' growing urban areas shape land development.

Your participation in this survey is vital, and your effort is greatly appreciated. Your answers on the survey will be confidential to the extent permitted or required by law. This survey should take about 10 minutes to complete. The risk involved in answering the survey questions is minimal, and there are no risks greater than those you would come across in everyday life.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints regarding this study, you may contact Phil Lasley at (979) 458-2308 or P-Lasley@tti.tamu.edu. This research study has been reviewed by the Human Subjects' Protection Program and/or the Institutional Review Board at Texas A&M University. For research-related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research participant, you can contact these offices at (979) 458-4067 or irb@tamu.edu.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

Yes

No → THANK AND TERMINATE

Thinking about the last residential contract you finalized where you represented the buyer, please answer the following questions. If you represented both the buyer and seller, please base your responses to the following questions based on your experience representing the buyer only.

1. Was this a contract to purchase or a contract to lease/rent?
    a. Purchase
    b. Lease/rent
    c. Other, specify
    d. Don't know/refuse
2. [IF PURCHASE] What was the approximate final sales price of the property?
    a. Enter numeric value
    b. Don't know/refuse

3. [IF LEASE/RENTAL] What was the approximate monthly rent/lease fee of the property?
    a. Enter numeric value
    b. Don’t know/refuse
4. The next several questions are in regard to the client(s) you represented. How many individuals signed the contract?
    a. 1
    b. 2
    c. 3+
    d. Don’t know/refuse
5. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Was the client also the resident, or does the client intend to move into the property in the future?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know/refuse
6. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] How old was the client?
    a. 18–24
    b. 25–34
    c. 35–44
    d. 45–54
    e. 55–64
    f. 65+
7. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Prior to acquiring the property, did your client reside within the region or outside the region? For purposes of this survey, the region consists of the core urban county (or counties) as well as any adjacent counties.
    a. My client previously resided within the region
    b. My client previously resided outside the region
    c. Don’t know/refuse
8. [IF WITHIN THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what zip code did your client reside?
    a. Enter five-digit numeric zip code
    b. Don’t know/refuse
9. [IF OUTSIDE THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what city or country did your client reside?
    a. Enter the open text response
    b. Don’t know/refuse
10. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Which of the following best describes the client’s relationship status?

a. Single
b. Married or domestic partnership
c. Widowed
d. Divorced
e. Separated
f. Don’t know/refuse

11. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Did the client have children?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know/refuse
12. [IF CLIENT HAD CHILDREN] How many children did the client have within the following age ranges? An approximation is fine.
    a. 0–4 (pre-K)
    b. 5–10 (elementary)
    c. 11–13 (middle)
    d. 14–17 (high)
    e. 18+ (college)
    f. Don’t know/refuse
13. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Was the client employed full (40 or more hours per week) or part (less than 40 hours per week) time?
    a. Yes, client employed full time
    b. Yes, client employed part time
    c. No, the client was not employed full or part time
    d. Don’t know/refuse
14. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Did the client previously own or rent/lease?
    a. Own
    b. Rent/lease
    c. Other, specify
    d. Don’t know/refuse
15. [IF SINGLE CLIENT] Which of the following income categories best describes the client’s annual household income (before taxes and other deductions)?
    a. Less than $35,000
    b. $35,000 to $49,999
    c. $50,000 to $74,999
    d. $75,000 to $99,999
    e. $100,000 to $124,999
    f. $125,000 to $149,999
    g. $150,000 +

    h. Don’t know/refuse
16. [IF TWO CLIENTS] At any point in time are either of the clients going to reside in the property?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know/refuse
17. [IF TWO CLIENTS] I want you to think about the two clients you represented. They may have been a couple, or they may not have. For the next few questions, I would like you to think of them as client 1 and client 2. Let’s think about client 1 first. How old was client 1?
    a. 18–24
    b. 25–34
    c. 35–44
    d. 45–54
    e. 55–64
    f. 65+
    g. Don’t know/refuse
18. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Prior to acquiring the property, did client 1 reside within the region or outside the region? For purposes of this survey, the region consists of the core urban county (or counties) as well as any adjacent counties.
    a. Client 1 previously resided within the region
    b. Client 1 previously resided outside the region
    c. Don’t know/refuse
19. [IF CLIENT 1 WITHIN THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what zip code did client 1 reside?
    a. Enter the five-digit numeric zip code
    b. Don’t know/refuse
20. [IF CLIENT 1 OUTSIDE THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what city or country did client 1 reside?
    a. Enter open text response
    b. Don’t know/refuse
21. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Was client 1 employed full (40 or more hours per week) or part (less than 40 hours per week) time?
    a. Yes, client 1 employed full time
    b. Yes, client 1 employed part time
    c. No, client 1 was not employed full or part time
    d. Don’t know/refuse
22. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Did client 1 previously own or rent/lease?

a. Own
b. Rent/lease
c. Other, specify
d. Don’t know/refuse

23. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Now, let’s think about client 2. How old was client 2?
    a. 18–24
    b. 25–34
    c. 35–44
    d. 45–54
    e. 55–64
    f. 65+
    g. Don’t know/refuse
24. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Prior to acquiring the property, did client 2 reside within the region or outside the region? For purposes of this survey, the region consists of the core urban county (or counties) as well as any adjacent counties.
    a. Client 2 previously resided within the region
    b. Client 2 previously resided outside the region
    c. Don’t know/refuse
25. [IF CLIENT 2 WITHIN THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what zip code did client 2 reside?
    a. Enter the five-digit numeric zip code
    b. Don’t know/refuse
26. [IF CLIENT 2 OUTSIDE THE REGION] Prior to acquiring the property, in what city or country did client 2 reside?
    a. Enter open text response
    b. Don’t know/refuse
27. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Was client 2 employed full (40 or more hours per week) or part (less than 40 hours per week) time?
    a. Yes, client 1 employed full time
    b. Yes, client 1 employed part time
    c. No, client 1 was not employed full or part time
    d. Don’t know/refuse
28. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Did client 2 previously own or rent/lease?
    a. Own
    b. Rent/lease
    c. Other, specify
    d. Don’t know/refuse

29. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Which of the following best describes the relationship between client 1 and client 2?
    a. Married or domestic partnership
    b. Related
    c. Not related/not married/non-domestic partnership
    d. Other, specify
    e. Don't know/refuse
30. [IF TWO CLIENTS AND MARRIED OR DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP] Do the clients have children?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don't know/refuse
31. [IF TWO CLIENTS AND MARRIED OR DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIP AND CHILDREN] How many children do the clients have within the following age ranges?
    a. 0–4 (pre-K)
    b. 5–10 (elementary)
    c. 11–13 (middle)
    d. 14–17 (high)
    e. 18+ (college)
    f. Don't know/refuse
32. [IF TWO CLIENTS] Which of the following income categories best describes the client's combined annual income (before taxes and other deductions)?
    a. Less than $35,000
    b. $35,000 to $49,999
    c. $50,000 to $74,999
    d. $75,000 to $99,999
    e. $100,000 to $124,999
    f. $125,000 to $149,999
    g. $150,000 +
    h. Don't know/refuse
33. The next few questions are about the property location. What was the zip code of the property that was acquired?
    a. Record numeric response
    b. Don't know/refuse
34. When you first began working with your clients, how location specific were they?
    a. My client(s) had specific zip codes in which they were interested

b. My client(s) did not have specific zip codes in which they were interested, but they did have specific areas within the region
c. My clients were not location specific at all
d. Don't know/refuse

35. Did your clients maintain this level of specificity throughout the process, or did this specificity change as the process went on?
    a. My client's level of specificity did not change throughout the process
    b. My client's level of specificity did change throughout the process
    c. Don't know/refuse
36. [IF SINGLE-CLIENT PURCHASE AND LIVED OUTSIDE THE REGION PRIOR TO ACQUISITION or TWO-CLIENT PURCHASE AND EITHER LIVED OUTSIDE THE REGION PRIOR TO ACQUISITION] Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is assigned to a concern that was not at all important and 7 is assigned to a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concerns that may or may not have been voiced by your client in his or her decision to move to this **region**.
    a. School quality
    b. Crime or perceived safety
    c. Traffic congestion or commute distance
    d. Convenient access to services and amenities (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)
    e. Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)
    f. Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)
    g. Cool factor or hipness
    h. Proximity to family and friends
    i. Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation
    j. Job relocation, career change, or retirement
    k. Transition from owner to renter or renter to owner
    l. Change in relationship status or establish own household
    m. Health reasons or natural disaster
    n. Attend or leave college
37. Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is assigned to a concern that was not at all important and 7 is assigned to a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concerns that may or may not have been voiced by your client in his or her decision to move to this **zip code**.
    a. School quality
    b. Crime or perceived safety
    c. Traffic congestion or commute distance

d. Convenient access to services and amenities (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)
e. Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)
f. Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)
g. Cool factor or hipness
h. Proximity to family and friends
i. Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation
j. Job relocation, career change, or retirement
k. Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner
l. Change in relationship status or establish own household
m. Health reasons or natural disaster
n. Attend or leave college

38. Using a scale from 1 to 7, where 1 is a concern that was not at all important and 7 is a concern that was extremely important, please assign a value to the following concern regarding your client's decision to acquire **this specific property**.
    a. Square footage
    b. Number of bedrooms
    c. Number of bathrooms
    d. Price
    e. Acreage and/or lot size
    f. Year structure was built/renovated
    g. Presence of yard
    h. Type of house (single-family detached, townhouse, condominium, or multifamily)
    i. Cost of utilities
    j. Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without
39. Was there any other reason your client factored into his or her decision to acquire this property?
    a. Yes, specify
    b. No
    c. Don't know/refuse
40. These last few questions are specifically about you and your career as a REALTOR®. In what metro or region do you typically work?
    a. Record open text response
    b. Don't know/refuse
41. Do you specialize in a specific area within this metro or region?
    a. Yes
    b. No

    c. Don’t know/refuse
42. [IF SPECIALTY AREA] What area is that?
    a. Record open text response
43. How many years have you been a licensed REALTOR® in Texas?
    a. Record numeric response
    b. Don’t know/refuse
44. Do you cater to a specific type of client or type of property?
    a. Yes
    b. No
    c. Don’t know/refuse
45. [IF SPECIALTY AREA] What type of client or property is this?
    a. Record open text response

We understand that your time is valuable and appreciate your assistance in our research.

Your survey response and the corresponding research will be used to inform policy makers and practitioners on how Texans make housing decisions and what role adequate infrastructure and traffic congestion play in these decisions. Insight into this question will provide state policy makers evidence-based information on several issues:

- How do people make housing decisions?
- How important is transportation in these decisions?
- How do urban congestion problems affect development decisions in Texas?
- How much reliance can be placed on traditional capital or operational transportation improvements?
- How much of the solution might come from some sort of land use or transportation policy solution?

Understanding the factors that influence where a person lives will improve the type, scale, and timeliness of capital improvements and land use policies as Texas cities continue to grow.

If you would like to request a copy of the survey results or the final report, please contact Phil Lasley at (979) 458-2308 or P-Lasley@tti.tamu.edu.

Thank you!

APPENDIX C

TEXAS DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Texas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.47	4.79	5.67	5.21	5.64	4.50	5.62	5.76	5.39	5.53	5.37	5.51	5.23	5.55	5.04
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2	5.31	4.83	5.48	5.44	5.28	3.63	5.63	5.29	5.71	5.46	4.71	5.14	6.10	5.48	4.53
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3	5.06	4.61	5.22	5.02	5.20	3.13	5.02	5.68	4.84	5.21	4.91	5.05	5.10	5.15	4.64
Crime or perceived safety	4	4.82	4.66	4.93	4.86	4.83	4.13	5.04	5.19	4.77	4.92	4.63	4.86	4.62	4.95	4.22
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	5	4.74	4.28	4.91	4.67	4.78	3.63	4.92	5.00	4.67	4.82	4.63	4.77	4.58	4.81	4.45
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.41	4.38	4.44	4.48	4.37	3.62	5.07	4.00	4.68	4.36	4.28	4.45	4.20	4.50	3.91
Traffic congestion or commute distance	7	4.34	4.17	4.42	4.46	4.40	3.25	4.45	4.45	4.56	4.58	3.63	4.28	4.57	4.53	3.38
Proximity to family and friends	8	3.79	4.24	3.72	3.84	3.86	3.75	3.86	3.64	3.54	3.51	4.49	3.96	2.97	3.64	4.44
School quality	9	3.57	3.14	3.76	3.05	3.99	2.25	3.94	3.90	4.06	4.21	1.93	3.57	3.53	3.82	2.31
Cool factor or hipness	10	2.50	2.54	2.50	2.70	2.41	1.88	2.41	2.78	2.68	2.56	2.25	2.46	2.73	2.55	2.25
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	11	2.25	2.93	2.06	2.64	2.05	1.38	2.36	2.23	2.56	2.36	1.77	2.23	2.37	2.30	2.09
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.07	2.63	1.91	2.14	2.06	2.00	2.19	2.02	2.03	2.17	1.88	2.03	2.25	2.09	1.93
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.89	1.96	1.87	1.97	1.87	2.13	1.99	1.83	1.67	1.69	2.46	1.89	1.90	1.79	2.40
Attend or leave college	14	1.73	1.86	1.68	1.89	1.68	2.13	1.60	1.71	2.04	1.77	1.36	1.69	1.93	1.72	1.76

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
Green (with no other color) indicates a score that is statistically significantly higher than other means in its demographic category.
Red (with no other color) indicates a score that is statistically significantly lower than other means in its demographic category.
Green and Red indicate that those two scores are statistically significantly different from one another, but not necessarily from the third score, with red being the low score and green the high score.
Green, red, and orange indicate all three means are statistically significantly different from one another.

Why Move to the Neighborhood: Texas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.46	5.30	5.49	5.47	5.47	5.13	5.53	5.44	5.65	5.34	5.28	5.50	5.18	5.47	5.10
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	4.98	4.85	5.05	5.06	4.93	3.71	4.94	5.27	5.04	4.96	4.90	5.02	4.72	5.01	4.69
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3	4.78	4.81	4.79	4.91	4.69	4.56	4.91	4.87	5.05	4.66	4.65	4.77	4.89	4.81	4.46
Crime or perceived safety	4	4.77	4.65	4.87	4.77	4.80	4.13	4.91	4.84	4.94	4.71	4.70	4.78	4.70	4.84	4.44
Traffic congestion or commute distance	5	4.40	4.52	4.41	4.65	4.26	4.15	4.54	4.50	4.82	4.44	3.81	4.38	4.51	4.53	3.54
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.30	4.49	4.26	4.40	4.21	4.79	4.69	3.89	4.66	4.17	4.14	4.35	3.94	4.32	4.26
Proximity to family and friends	7	4.16	4.50	4.08	4.12	4.25	4.60	4.34	3.89	4.44	3.91	4.29	4.24	3.58	4.13	4.32
School quality	8	3.95	3.30	4.21	3.36	4.47	3.83	4.29	3.84	4.22	4.46	2.48	3.95	3.83	4.13	2.48
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	9	3.40	3.39	3.39	3.48	3.33	3.23	3.54	3.45	3.29	3.53	3.25	3.28	4.29	3.43	3.11
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	2.97	3.47	2.81	3.37	2.68	3.52	3.50	2.42	3.86	2.83	2.05	3.03	2.53	3.10	1.99
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.79	2.83	2.73	3.21	2.51	2.44	2.81	3.04	3.20	2.69	2.30	2.74	3.13	2.83	2.24
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.47	3.22	2.19	2.79	2.23	2.88	2.70	2.21	2.92	2.37	2.09	2.44	2.63	2.51	2.14
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.94	2.08	1.88	2.01	1.89	2.27	2.07	1.79	1.84	1.83	2.25	1.93	1.95	1.87	2.30
Attend or leave college	14	1.83	2.02	1.72	1.97	1.72	2.33	1.93	1.67	2.03	1.84	1.39	1.78	2.13	1.82	1.65

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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Green, red, and orange indicate all three means are statistically significantly different from one another.

Why Choose the House: Texas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Price	1	5.76	5.88	5.73	5.78	5.76	6.19	5.92	5.54	6.03	5.74	5.48	5.78	5.59	5.82	5.41
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2	5.74	5.55	5.84	5.67	5.81	5.06	5.75	5.78	5.77	5.74	5.72	5.82	5.19	5.77	5.59
Number of bedrooms	3	5.34	5.17	5.41	5.16	5.51	5.27	5.49	5.23	5.38	5.43	5.47	5.33	5.39	5.38	4.94
Square footage	4	5.05	4.93	5.15	4.94	5.17	4.85	5.15	5.14	5.11	5.11	4.91	5.10	4.71	5.09	4.84
Presence of yard	5	5.03	4.72	5.20	4.93	5.14	4.88	5.08	5.07	5.15	5.13	4.72	5.12	4.37	5.10	4.66
Number of bathrooms	6	5.01	4.76	5.11	4.88	5.15	4.77	5.19	4.98	5.01	5.14	4.74	5.04	4.79	5.06	4.62
Acreage and/or lot size	7	4.41	3.93	4.59	4.32	4.50	4.35	4.40	4.44	4.35	4.51	4.19	4.56	3.18	4.43	4.12
Year structure was built/renovated	8	4.37	4.22	4.49	4.35	4.42	3.65	4.45	4.46	4.36	4.54	4.21	4.46	3.64	4.45	4.13
Cost of utilities	9	3.92	3.99	3.91	3.94	3.91	4.31	4.16	3.56	4.05	3.90	3.79	3.92	3.86	3.95	3.65
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	10	3.83	3.60	3.98	3.72	3.95	3.17	3.89	4.07	3.83	3.86	3.92	3.88	3.45	3.90	3.58

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APPENDIX D

AUSTIN DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Austin

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.54	4.18	6.03	5.46	5.58	n/a	5.67	6.06	5.77	6.16	4.59	5.64	5.18	6.03	4.15
Crime or perceived safety	2	5.26	4.36	5.58	5.00	5.54	n/a	5.67	5.41	5.46	5.53	4.71	5.15	5.64	5.76	3.85
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3	5.22	4.09	5.61	5.00	5.46	n/a	5.61	5.35	5.85	5.37	4.47	5.13	5.55	5.62	4.08
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	4	5.06	4.64	5.36	5.17	4.79	n/a	5.39	5.24	5.46	5.42	4.41	4.64	6.55	5.24	4.54
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	5	5.00	3.27	5.67	4.75	5.25	n/a	5.44	5.41	5.31	5.26	4.47	4.90	5.36	5.38	3.92
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.78	4.82	4.89	4.67	5.00	n/a	5.00	4.47	4.69	5.11	4.41	4.69	5.09	5.08	3.92
Traffic congestion or commute distance	7	4.48	4.09	4.72	4.17	4.83	n/a	5.22	4.41	5.00	4.74	3.65	4.21	5.45	4.89	3.31
Proximity to family and friends	8	4.14	4.36	4.06	4.38	4.13	n/a	4.56	4.00	4.46	3.58	4.53	4.28	3.64	3.86	4.92
School quality	9	3.64	2.91	3.94	3.08	4.38	n/a	4.06	4.00	4.08	4.89	1.88	3.72	3.36	4.19	2.08
Cool factor or hipness	10	3.14	2.73	3.20	3.39	2.96	n/a	3.67	2.56	3.50	3.05	2.94	3.05	3.50	3.25	2.85
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	11	2.84	1.82	3.17	2.79	3.00	n/a	3.44	3.00	3.38	3.37	1.71	2.82	2.91	3.19	1.85
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.52	2.36	2.44	2.46	2.71	n/a	3.22	2.18	2.54	2.58	2.24	2.59	2.27	2.51	2.54
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	2.48	2.55	2.44	2.21	2.88	n/a	3.00	2.06	1.77	2.32	3.12	2.33	3.00	2.30	3.00
Attend or leave college	14	1.98	2.91	1.61	2.25	1.79	n/a	1.33	1.94	2.23	2.26	1.35	1.82	2.55	1.68	2.85

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Why Move to the Neighborhood: Austin

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.51	5.31	5.62	5.59	5.42	5.00	5.48	5.50	5.78	5.55	4.78	5.50	5.55	5.57	4.56
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	5.13	5.08	5.23	5.15	5.11	4.00	5.25	5.04	5.16	5.28	4.75	5.15	5.00	5.21	4.50
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3	5.03	4.98	5.04	5.09	4.99	4.00	5.26	4.98	5.16	5.18	4.39	5.00	5.17	5.10	4.17
Traffic congestion or commute distance	4	4.66	4.80	4.63	4.91	4.45	4.00	4.98	4.60	5.40	4.43	3.89	4.61	4.93	4.74	3.89
Crime or perceived safety	5	4.58	4.27	4.82	4.44	4.88	3.00	4.92	4.65	4.40	4.91	4.28	4.57	4.66	4.68	4.00
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.42	4.24	4.44	4.55	4.38	4.00	4.75	4.13	4.51	4.37	4.00	4.38	4.66	4.36	4.17
Proximity to family and friends	7	4.13	4.29	4.02	4.10	4.30	4.33	4.26	3.90	4.18	3.95	4.22	4.22	3.69	4.01	4.89
School quality	8	4.07	3.39	4.37	3.43	5.04	4.33	4.49	3.83	3.71	4.91	2.67	4.15	3.66	4.14	2.78
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	9	3.43	3.78	3.21	3.68	3.16	2.67	3.89	2.83	3.95	3.62	1.97	3.52	2.97	3.55	1.89
Cool factor or hipness	10	3.41	3.29	3.44	3.77	2.99	3.67	3.64	3.44	4.16	3.06	2.78	3.35	3.72	3.50	2.67
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	11	3.13	2.61	3.30	3.07	3.22	2.67	3.43	3.21	2.65	3.22	3.53	2.96	4.00	3.04	3.50
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.74	2.92	2.44	3.06	2.36	3.33	3.15	2.31	2.82	2.68	2.28	2.59	3.52	2.71	2.22
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.97	2.00	1.97	1.93	2.05	2.00	2.54	1.54	1.62	2.02	2.47	1.90	2.34	1.94	2.56
Attend or leave college	14	1.95	1.88	1.80	2.07	1.82	3.67	1.80	1.60	1.84	2.02	1.44	1.80	2.72	1.76	2.50

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Why Choose the House: Austin

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Price	1	5.70	5.71	5.69	5.80	5.63	5.67	5.79	5.63	5.96	5.66	5.19	5.68	5.79	5.71	5.33
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2	5.69	5.12	6.04	5.53	5.97	4.00	5.74	5.90	5.51	6.11	5.31	5.82	4.97	5.74	5.56
Number of bedrooms	3	5.23	4.88	5.48	5.01	5.62	6.00	5.49	5.10	5.07	5.66	4.61	5.18	5.52	5.30	4.72
Square footage	4	5.04	4.78	5.26	5.01	5.15	5.33	4.93	5.27	5.13	5.18	4.69	5.10	4.72	5.12	4.67
Presence of yard	5	4.95	3.84	5.49	4.79	5.22	3.67	4.64	5.46	4.65	5.28	4.69	5.11	4.07	4.98	4.67
Number of bathrooms	6	4.87	4.51	5.17	4.62	5.27	6.00	5.00	5.10	4.69	5.38	4.36	4.86	4.90	5.05	3.89
Year structure was built/renovated	7	4.28	4.02	4.56	4.25	4.36	3.33	4.34	4.52	4.33	4.71	3.94	4.39	3.72	4.50	3.61
Acreage and/or lot size	8	4.26	3.31	4.69	4.20	4.44	3.00	3.98	4.56	3.78	4.68	4.06	4.51	2.93	4.34	3.39
Cost of utilities	9	3.86	3.82	3.93	3.79	4.03	4.33	4.10	3.65	3.75	4.08	3.64	3.86	3.86	3.83	4.11
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	10	3.53	3.51	3.66	3.49	3.60	2.33	3.56	4.00	3.36	3.78	3.44	3.55	3.41	3.68	2.78

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APPENDIX E

DALLAS-FORT WORTH DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Dallas-Fort Worth

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	1	5.59	4.75	5.82	5.81	5.54	5.00	5.74	5.44	6.00	5.43	5.53	5.47	6.14	5.59	5.63
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	2	5.53	4.75	5.76	5.08	5.85	4.50	5.43	6.48	5.26	5.55	5.80	5.55	5.43	5.46	6.13
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3	5.09	4.88	5.24	4.96	5.31	3.00	5.04	5.88	5.00	5.17	5.00	5.11	5.00	5.10	5.00
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4	5.04	4.63	5.09	4.73	5.23	4.25	5.13	5.52	4.53	5.21	5.20	5.13	4.64	4.94	5.88
Crime or perceived safety	5	4.79	4.38	5.15	4.27	5.23	5.00	4.52	5.84	4.58	5.07	4.27	4.90	4.29	4.87	4.13
Traffic congestion or commute distance	6	4.68	4.63	4.76	4.88	4.60	4.00	4.78	5.00	4.74	5.00	3.73	4.76	4.36	4.85	3.25
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	7	4.47	4.69	4.44	4.19	4.65	3.50	5.04	4.08	4.89	4.21	4.67	4.60	3.93	4.50	4.25
School quality	8	3.78	2.19	4.36	2.58	4.54	3.25	3.96	4.84	3.95	4.14	2.53	3.68	4.21	3.88	2.88
Proximity to family and friends	9	3.64	4.06	3.63	3.85	3.62	4.00	3.17	4.00	3.58	3.37	4.47	3.85	2.71	3.58	4.13
Cool factor or hipness	10	2.34	1.94	2.53	2.38	2.33	2.50	2.22	2.68	2.26	2.57	1.80	2.23	2.86	2.34	2.38
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	11	2.09	2.25	2.02	2.35	2.00	1.00	2.30	2.08	2.21	2.00	2.20	2.08	2.14	2.07	2.25
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	1.99	2.44	1.94	2.31	1.85	2.75	2.39	1.92	2.42	1.85	1.80	1.97	2.07	1.99	2.00
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.83	2.06	1.82	1.77	1.90	1.75	1.87	2.12	1.74	1.64	2.47	1.90	1.50	1.76	2.38
Attend or leave college	14	1.66	1.50	1.69	1.62	1.71	2.00	1.78	1.64	1.84	1.79	1.07	1.65	1.71	1.72	1.13

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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Why Move to the Neighborhood: Dallas-Fort Worth

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.55	5.21	5.68	5.53	5.59	4.94	5.47	5.83	5.77	5.35	5.74	5.67	5.05	5.53	5.75
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	4.96	4.56	5.13	4.90	5.01	3.87	4.99	5.33	5.14	4.83	4.93	5.07	4.38	4.99	4.30
Crime or perceived safety	3	4.87	4.33	5.13	4.78	4.94	4.44	4.79	5.13	5.23	4.63	5.00	4.93	4.59	4.91	4.65
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4	4.85	4.50	4.98	4.99	4.77	4.31	5.01	4.94	5.27	4.56	4.98	4.89	4.84	4.82	5.30
Traffic congestion or commute distance	5	4.48	4.17	4.61	4.78	4.29	3.81	4.42	4.79	4.81	4.46	3.80	4.55	4.14	4.60	2.80
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.34	4.54	4.35	4.62	4.12	3.81	4.85	3.98	5.13	4.01	4.33	4.40	3.89	4.40	4.65
School quality	7	4.26	3.46	4.65	3.41	4.86	4.19	4.66	4.43	4.63	4.68	2.35	4.28	4.30	4.44	2.20
Proximity to family and friends	8	4.25	4.49	4.34	4.36	4.20	4.19	4.75	4.10	4.78	3.83	4.76	4.38	3.54	4.29	4.30
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	9	3.34	3.19	3.33	3.68	3.11	3.06	3.19	3.48	3.32	3.24	3.65	3.26	4.03	3.29	3.70
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	2.78	3.04	2.69	3.39	2.38	3.19	3.26	2.29	3.83	2.35	1.85	2.83	2.49	2.82	1.65
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.67	2.61	2.66	3.12	2.39	2.12	2.81	2.98	3.13	2.51	1.96	2.69	2.54	2.68	1.80
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.21	2.65	2.06	2.64	1.91	2.19	2.47	1.87	2.64	2.02	1.89	2.21	2.11	2.23	1.65
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.68	1.76	1.65	1.76	1.63	1.56	1.75	1.70	1.67	1.59	1.89	1.68	1.54	1.64	2.00
Attend or leave college	14	1.58	1.78	1.53	1.84	1.42	1.81	1.85	1.42	1.93	1.52	1.07	1.56	1.68	1.62	1.00

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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Green, red, and orange indicate all three means are statistically significantly different from one another.

Why Choose the House: Dallas-Fort Worth

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Price	1	5.90	6.07	5.86	6.07	5.79	6.25	6.05	5.58	6.20	5.75	5.72	5.94	5.57	5.90	5.70
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2	5.88	5.53	6.03	5.88	5.87	5.38	5.82	5.93	6.06	5.75	6.07	5.98	5.24	5.89	5.95
Number of bedrooms	3	5.49	5.40	5.52	5.35	5.61	5.81	5.66	5.38	5.63	5.45	5.28	5.50	5.46	5.51	5.05
Square footage	4	5.15	5.01	5.29	4.98	5.29	5.19	5.19	5.37	5.15	5.19	5.17	5.18	4.92	5.17	5.25
Presence of yard	5	5.10	4.79	5.27	5.05	5.17	5.06	5.19	5.21	5.40	5.06	4.78	5.25	4.08	5.14	4.75
Number of bathrooms	6	5.08	4.92	5.18	4.92	5.22	5.00	5.25	5.15	5.02	5.23	4.80	5.11	4.92	5.12	4.75
Acreage and/or lot size	7	4.48	3.93	4.70	4.41	4.54	4.25	4.49	4.69	4.60	4.42	4.39	4.67	2.95	4.46	4.65
Year structure was built/renovated	8	4.42	4.25	4.55	4.48	4.41	3.31	4.45	4.46	4.21	4.55	4.46	4.50	3.70	4.44	4.35
Cost of utilities	9	3.91	3.86	3.99	3.90	3.92	4.31	4.14	3.62	4.21	3.78	3.87	3.92	3.78	3.97	3.45
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	10	3.86	3.47	3.95	3.81	3.91	2.88	3.91	4.07	3.85	3.90	3.70	3.92	3.38	3.88	3.25

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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APPENDIX F

HOUSTON DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Houston

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	1	5.73	5.43	5.86	6.39	5.55	1.00	5.67	6.00	6.00	5.84	5.20	5.67	5.90	5.85	4.20
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	5.38	5.57	5.37	5.39	5.49	3.50	5.33	5.83	5.21	5.51	5.07	5.41	5.29	5.40	5.40
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	3	5.32	5.50	5.27	5.65	5.24	2.50	5.29	5.31	5.58	5.16	5.20	5.41	5.05	5.32	5.20
Crime or perceived safety	4	4.87	5.36	4.83	5.48	4.61	3.00	5.19	5.10	5.16	4.91	4.27	5.09	4.29	4.93	3.80
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	5	4.76	5.29	4.76	5.35	4.59	2.50	5.10	4.66	5.16	4.47	4.93	5.00	4.10	4.73	4.80
Traffic congestion or commute distance	6	4.63	5.07	4.56	5.30	4.47	2.50	4.38	4.69	4.95	4.63	4.07	4.67	4.52	4.66	4.00
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	7	4.20	4.43	4.17	4.96	3.84	3.50	5.00	3.59	5.47	3.74	3.93	4.52	3.33	4.26	3.40
Proximity to family and friends	8	3.57	4.21	3.51	3.39	3.76	6.00	4.43	2.93	4.11	3.09	4.00	3.93	2.57	3.37	5.80
School quality	9	3.52	3.00	3.71	3.09	3.80	1.50	3.76	3.48	4.42	3.84	1.40	3.74	2.90	3.55	2.40
Cool factor or hipness	10	2.35	3.14	2.22	3.00	2.14	1.50	2.10	2.72	3.00	2.26	2.00	2.43	2.14	2.38	1.80
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	11	2.13	3.29	1.90	3.13	1.69	2.50	1.90	1.93	2.79	2.09	1.53	2.29	1.67	2.10	2.80
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.05	2.86	1.90	2.26	1.94	1.50	1.95	2.14	2.16	2.28	1.40	1.95	2.33	2.11	1.20
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.77	2.14	1.71	2.09	1.65	2.50	1.86	1.66	1.53	1.60	2.67	1.91	1.38	1.70	2.40
Attend or leave college	14	1.61	1.64	1.62	1.91	1.47	1.00	1.48	1.90	2.32	1.47	1.20	1.55	1.76	1.66	1.00

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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Why Move to the Neighborhood: Houston

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.46	5.57	5.40	5.50	5.49	5.89	5.58	5.26	5.66	5.29	5.37	5.52	5.08	5.45	5.22
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	5.27	5.20	5.34	5.26	5.29	4.67	5.18	5.34	5.28	5.17	5.41	5.30	5.04	5.25	5.38
Crime or perceived safety	3	5.19	5.16	5.28	5.17	5.22	5.11	5.32	5.26	5.29	5.17	5.13	5.22	5.00	5.23	5.06
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4	4.98	4.95	5.07	5.01	4.95	5.67	5.03	5.09	5.20	4.72	5.24	4.98	4.94	5.01	4.75
Traffic congestion or commute distance	5	4.86	5.19	4.85	4.97	4.85	5.67	4.71	4.90	5.22	4.92	4.47	4.87	4.81	4.98	4.28
Proximity to family and friends	6	4.34	4.77	4.21	4.24	4.46	6.11	4.45	4.06	4.71	4.03	4.43	4.52	3.31	4.23	5.09
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	7	4.25	4.74	4.14	4.29	4.24	6.22	4.61	3.80	4.37	4.30	4.07	4.39	3.44	4.30	4.12
School quality	8	3.93	3.14	4.21	3.32	4.47	3.56	4.28	3.76	4.07	4.50	2.54	3.97	3.60	4.04	2.56
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	9	3.63	3.76	3.62	3.63	3.63	3.67	3.48	3.64	3.62	3.73	3.46	3.49	4.50	3.69	3.16
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	2.98	3.59	2.77	3.42	2.65	4.00	3.59	2.69	3.67	2.84	2.42	3.12	2.15	3.11	1.97
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.97	3.03	2.91	3.47	2.63	3.00	2.79	3.15	3.36	2.84	2.68	2.94	3.19	2.94	3.03
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.68	3.47	2.40	2.90	2.47	4.11	2.79	2.70	3.19	2.64	2.21	2.73	2.42	2.74	2.22
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	2.05	2.14	1.99	2.05	2.04	3.44	2.09	1.94	1.95	1.78	2.59	2.11	1.71	1.94	2.72
Attend or leave college	14	1.86	2.05	1.79	1.88	1.83	2.78	2.03	1.88	2.27	1.81	1.45	1.88	1.75	1.89	1.69

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Why Choose the House: Houston

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Price	1	5.83	5.85	5.90	5.63	5.99	6.33	6.00	5.65	5.98	5.87	5.76	5.91	5.40	5.90	5.66
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2	5.81	5.70	5.90	5.76	5.82	6.22	5.89	5.72	5.92	5.78	5.70	5.92	5.19	5.83	5.53
Number of bedrooms	3	5.36	5.20	5.44	5.07	5.57	5.56	5.42	5.24	5.41	5.44	5.08	5.36	5.31	5.38	5.03
Presence of yard	4	5.13	4.95	5.29	4.99	5.26	5.78	5.26	5.06	5.36	5.29	4.59	5.22	4.60	5.22	4.47
Square footage	5	5.11	5.13	5.15	4.89	5.24	5.56	5.19	5.13	5.19	5.09	5.00	5.19	4.67	5.11	4.94
Number of bathrooms	6	4.98	4.77	5.04	4.86	5.09	5.78	5.20	4.79	5.07	5.03	4.67	5.06	4.60	4.97	4.84
Year structure was built/renovated	7	4.49	4.30	4.58	4.46	4.48	5.22	4.59	4.30	4.39	4.68	4.25	4.64	3.63	4.48	4.41
Acreage and/or lot size	8	4.27	3.93	4.43	3.99	4.48	5.56	4.24	4.23	4.26	4.50	3.82	4.48	3.08	4.31	3.81
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	9	3.97	3.71	4.20	3.71	4.17	4.11	4.07	4.17	4.01	4.00	4.24	4.04	3.56	4.02	4.16
Cost of utilities	10	3.95	4.07	3.93	3.96	3.91	4.67	4.25	3.59	4.03	3.92	3.87	3.99	3.69	4.01	3.34

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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APPENDIX G

SAN ANTONIO DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: San Antonio

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.60	4.42	6.18	4.91	6.16	n/a	6.28	5.47	5.75	5.48	5.69	5.57	5.57	5.84	4.55
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2	5.56	4.84	5.92	5.55	5.47	n/a	5.76	5.24	6.58	5.76	4.44	5.43	6.29	5.82	4.55
Crime or perceived safety	3	4.98	4.53	5.21	4.91	4.94	n/a	5.40	4.88	4.33	5.10	5.25	5.02	4.71	5.02	4.73
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4	4.89	4.05	5.32	4.64	4.97	n/a	5.28	5.06	5.08	5.07	4.44	4.82	5.14	5.13	4.09
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	5	4.84	4.00	5.26	4.59	5.12	n/a	5.00	5.65	3.92	5.07	5.13	4.96	3.86	5.02	4.27
Traffic congestion or commute distance	6	4.54	3.53	5.05	4.32	4.75	n/a	4.64	4.94	4.42	5.10	3.63	4.51	4.43	4.87	3.09
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	7	4.46	4.21	4.58	4.59	4.41	n/a	5.32	3.88	4.58	5.03	3.31	4.22	5.86	4.47	4.27
Proximity to family and friends	8	3.96	4.32	3.79	4.18	3.75	n/a	3.80	3.71	3.00	3.93	4.75	4.08	2.86	3.69	4.91
School quality	9	3.77	3.89	3.71	3.55	3.94	n/a	3.68	4.12	3.75	4.79	1.94	3.71	3.71	3.98	3.18
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	2.47	3.63	1.89	2.50	2.50	n/a	2.04	2.59	2.92	2.72	1.69	2.51	2.43	2.47	2.64
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.26	2.11	2.34	2.00	2.53	n/a	1.92	3.06	2.08	2.52	1.94	2.35	1.86	2.49	1.36
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	1.77	2.26	1.53	1.55	2.00	n/a	1.80	1.88	1.42	1.90	1.81	1.82	1.57	1.76	1.82
Attend or leave college	13	1.63	1.37	1.76	1.55	1.75	n/a	1.88	1.82	2.00	1.76	1.13	1.65	1.57	1.80	1.00
Health reasons or natural disaster	14	1.58	1.37	1.68	1.68	1.53	n/a	1.88	1.18	1.92	1.48	1.50	1.53	2.00	1.58	1.55

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Why Move to the Neighborhood: San Antonio

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.39	4.84	5.50	5.54	5.32	4.80	5.51	5.41	5.65	5.20	5.19	5.37	5.15	5.48	4.72
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	2	4.86	4.87	4.85	5.05	4.70	3.60	5.24	4.87	5.16	4.98	4.30	4.83	4.77	4.97	4.28
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3	4.71	4.55	4.77	5.08	4.45	2.20	4.84	5.15	4.87	4.92	4.22	4.74	3.85	4.84	4.00
Crime or perceived safety	4	4.59	4.58	4.67	4.75	4.48	3.60	4.96	4.36	5.16	4.52	4.38	4.64	4.08	4.75	4.16
Traffic congestion or commute distance	5	4.50	4.29	4.56	4.67	4.36	4.00	5.08	4.05	4.87	4.89	3.38	4.51	4.00	4.68	3.48
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	6	4.29	4.37	4.30	4.54	4.01	5.20	4.86	3.90	4.87	4.42	3.68	4.32	4.15	4.32	4.28
Proximity to family and friends	7	4.00	4.63	3.83	4.05	4.00	2.80	4.47	2.97	4.23	3.84	4.27	3.95	3.85	3.95	4.36
School quality	8	3.82	2.66	4.18	3.44	4.08	3.00	3.84	3.69	4.35	3.92	2.81	3.77	3.77	4.03	2.60
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	9	3.76	3.76	3.79	3.97	3.53	2.80	4.22	3.77	4.23	4.17	2.73	3.62	4.92	3.94	2.96
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	2.72	3.29	2.67	2.73	2.81	3.40	3.22	2.33	4.29	2.81	1.70	2.79	1.92	3.10	1.76
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.44	2.45	2.40	2.60	2.39	2.40	2.35	2.79	2.32	2.81	1.84	2.41	2.69	2.64	1.52
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.20	2.89	1.99	2.35	2.13	2.00	2.59	2.08	2.74	2.22	1.89	2.21	1.92	2.33	1.88
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.80	1.61	1.84	1.90	1.75	1.80	1.71	1.72	1.77	1.75	1.81	1.77	2.08	1.73	1.84
Attend or leave college	14	1.70	1.84	1.66	1.68	1.70	1.60	1.84	1.69	1.81	1.78	1.51	1.68	2.00	1.80	1.36

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Why Choose the House: San Antonio

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	1	5.69	5.63	5.67	5.68	5.69	2.60	5.75	5.79	5.58	5.66	5.68	5.70	5.31	5.72	5.40
Price	2	5.68	6.00	5.53	5.84	5.58	5.60	5.90	5.38	6.06	5.83	5.11	5.64	6.08	5.82	5.12
Number of bedrooms	3	5.34	5.08	5.41	5.33	5.36	3.60	5.55	5.31	5.16	5.42	5.22	5.33	5.15	5.41	4.92
Square footage	4	4.99	4.82	5.07	5.03	5.01	2.80	5.22	5.05	4.94	5.05	4.89	5.04	4.23	5.10	4.48
Number of bathrooms	5	4.96	4.39	5.13	4.95	4.96	3.40	5.10	5.13	5.16	4.98	4.62	4.98	4.38	5.11	4.20
Presence of yard	6	4.92	4.66	5.01	5.10	4.79	3.20	5.24	4.64	5.00	5.05	4.51	4.97	4.00	5.02	4.48
Acreage and/or lot size	7	4.34	3.53	4.56	4.52	4.30	3.80	4.43	4.15	4.19	4.36	4.14	4.37	3.62	4.42	3.76
Year structure was built/renovated	8	4.15	3.76	4.33	4.00	4.32	1.60	4.20	4.95	3.87	4.55	3.84	4.23	2.85	4.34	3.60
Cost of utilities	9	3.84	3.76	3.89	4.17	3.61	3.80	3.92	3.82	3.74	4.09	3.54	3.85	4.00	3.97	3.36
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	10	3.72	3.05	4.00	3.83	3.66	1.00	3.69	4.00	3.39	3.88	3.65	3.76	3.08	3.85	3.12

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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APPENDIX H

CORPUS CHRISTI DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Corpus Christi

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.91	5.67	6.00	6.33	5.75	n/a	5.00	6.00	6.50	6.17	5.00	5.91	n/a	6.29	5.25
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	5.82	4.33	6.37	6.33	5.63	n/a	5.00	6.50	7.00	6.17	4.33	5.82	n/a	6.43	4.75
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3	4.45	3.67	4.75	3.00	5.00	n/a	5.00	3.67	5.50	4.50	3.67	4.45	n/a	5.14	3.25
Crime or perceived safety	4	4.36	4.33	4.38	4.33	4.37	n/a	5.00	4.33	5.50	4.83	2.67	4.36	n/a	4.71	3.75
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	5	4.09	3.00	4.50	1.33	5.13	n/a	5.00	3.17	7.00	3.67	3.00	4.09	n/a	5.00	2.50
Proximity to family and friends	6	3.90	6.00	3.00	3.00	4.13	n/a	1.00	3.60	4.50	3.40	4.33	3.90	n/a	3.00	5.25
Traffic congestion or commute distance	7	3.73	5.67	3.00	2.67	4.13	n/a	1.00	2.83	4.00	3.67	3.67	3.73	n/a	3.29	4.50
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	8	3.27	1.67	3.88	3.00	3.38	n/a	2.00	2.83	3.00	3.33	3.33	3.27	n/a	4.14	1.75
School quality	9	2.91	1.00	3.63	1.00	3.63	n/a	7.00	3.00	7.00	2.17	1.67	2.91	n/a	4.00	1.00
Cool factor or hipness	10	2.55	1.00	3.13	3.00	2.38	n/a	2.00	3.17	3.50	2.67	1.67	2.55	n/a	3.14	1.50
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	11	1.91	3.00	1.50	1.33	2.13	n/a	1.00	1.33	1.50	2.50	1.00	1.91	n/a	1.57	2.50
Health reasons or natural disaster	12	1.55	1.00	1.75	1.00	1.75	n/a	1.00	1.33	2.00	1.50	1.33	1.55	n/a	1.86	1.00
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	13	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	n/a	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	n/a	1.00	1.00
Attend or leave college	14	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	n/a	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	n/a	1.00	1.00

Notes: Scores are surveyed means of importance, where 7 is extremely important and 1 is not important at all.
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Why Move to the Neighborhood: Corpus Christi

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.52	5.80	5.67	5.16	5.90	n/a	6.10	5.50	5.62	5.82	5.50	5.55	6.00	5.73	5.50
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	5.08	5.60	5.08	4.89	5.25	n/a	5.30	5.50	5.00	5.41	5.25	5.13	4.00	5.17	5.75
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	3	4.48	4.90	4.38	4.11	5.00	n/a	4.60	3.80	5.00	4.18	4.50	4.50	4.00	4.67	3.50
Proximity to family and friends	4	4.27	4.20	4.04	3.95	4.60	n/a	3.70	4.10	3.92	4.35	3.50	4.29	4.00	3.90	5.50
Crime or perceived safety	5	4.10	4.30	3.92	4.42	3.95	n/a	3.80	3.80	3.92	4.35	3.00	4.05	4.00	4.23	2.50
School quality	6	4.08	3.50	4.42	3.42	4.85	n/a	4.80	3.30	5.15	4.00	1.50	4.00	7.00	4.37	2.50
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	7	4.07	3.90	4.33	3.63	4.40	n/a	5.10	3.00	4.77	3.71	4.50	4.08	4.00	4.47	2.25
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	8	3.75	4.50	3.46	3.74	3.90	n/a	4.40	3.50	3.77	3.71	4.00	3.74	4.00	3.90	2.75
Traffic congestion or commute distance	9	3.68	4.30	3.38	3.79	3.55	n/a	3.50	3.50	3.38	3.76	4.00	3.74	1.00	3.53	4.50
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	10	2.93	4.80	2.17	3.37	2.35	n/a	2.10	1.80	2.69	3.41	1.75	2.95	1.00	2.77	4.25
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.85	2.00	2.83	3.37	2.45	n/a	2.50	3.10	2.38	2.76	2.50	2.79	4.00	2.73	1.50
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	12	2.85	2.70	2.88	2.95	2.85	n/a	4.20	1.30	4.15	2.24	1.00	2.87	1.00	3.07	1.00
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	2.05	2.30	2.00	2.21	1.95	n/a	1.90	2.20	1.85	2.47	1.25	1.89	4.00	2.23	1.00
Attend or leave college	14	1.78	1.50	1.83	1.68	1.90	n/a	2.20	1.40	1.31	2.24	1.00	1.66	4.00	1.83	1.00

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Why Choose the House: Corpus Christi

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	1	6.02	5.90	6.38	5.68	6.35	n/a	6.20	6.30	6.31	6.12	6.50	6.08	5.00	6.27	6.00
Price	2	5.70	5.60	6.08	5.37	6.05	n/a	6.20	5.70	6.46	5.76	5.00	5.76	5.00	6.13	4.50
Number of bedrooms	3	5.60	5.10	5.96	5.21	6.00	n/a	6.20	5.30	6.31	5.35	5.25	5.61	5.00	6.00	3.50
Number of bathrooms	4	5.47	5.30	5.83	5.11	5.80	n/a	5.80	5.40	5.85	5.65	5.25	5.53	5.00	5.87	4.25
Square footage	5	5.33	5.10	5.75	5.00	5.60	n/a	5.50	5.20	5.77	5.41	5.50	5.37	5.00	5.77	4.00
Presence of yard	6	5.33	5.10	5.75	4.84	5.75	n/a	5.80	5.10	5.85	5.41	5.25	5.37	5.00	5.77	4.00
Acreage and/or lot size	7	4.68	5.20	4.75	4.58	4.70	n/a	4.30	4.80	4.77	4.94	5.00	4.68	5.00	4.83	5.25
Year structure was built/renovated	8	4.60	4.60	4.71	4.68	4.50	n/a	4.40	4.60	5.23	4.12	5.25	4.66	4.00	4.93	2.75
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	9	4.23	4.30	4.37	4.00	4.60	n/a	4.60	4.40	4.38	4.06	5.50	4.24	4.00	4.37	4.25
Cost of utilities	10	3.78	3.70	3.96	3.37	4.15	n/a	4.50	3.10	4.15	3.53	4.50	3.76	5.00	4.10	2.25

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APPENDIX I

RURAL & OTHER URBAN AREAS DATA TABLES

Why Move to the Region: Rural and Other Urban Areas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.35	4.92	5.42	4.76	5.52	6.50	5.40	5.35	4.50	5.53	5.58	5.37	5.14	5.33	5.50
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	2	4.73	4.85	4.68	4.71	4.85	3.50	5.56	4.71	4.21	5.12	4.50	4.63	5.71	4.84	4.57
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	3	4.62	4.62	4.62	4.95	4.59	3.00	4.32	5.18	3.64	4.74	5.00	4.55	5.29	4.55	4.93
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	4	4.47	4.46	4.45	4.19	4.50	4.00	5.08	4.65	3.64	4.50	4.88	4.49	4.29	4.52	4.21
Crime or perceived safety	5	4.45	4.77	4.35	4.76	4.30	3.50	4.60	4.76	4.14	4.26	4.85	4.43	4.57	4.52	4.50
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	6	4.18	4.08	4.20	4.05	4.11	3.50	3.84	4.82	3.14	4.38	4.46	4.18	4.14	4.12	4.64
Proximity to family and friends	7	3.81	3.85	3.85	3.43	4.09	1.00	3.68	3.94	2.21	3.85	4.62	3.82	3.71	3.93	3.07
Traffic congestion or commute distance	8	3.51	3.31	3.54	3.76	3.69	2.50	3.60	3.35	3.57	3.65	3.28	3.47	3.86	3.61	3.21
School quality	9	3.32	4.08	3.20	3.33	3.50	1.00	4.12	3.24	3.57	4.26	1.96	3.24	4.14	3.71	1.86
Cool factor or hipness	10	2.56	3.46	2.39	2.71	2.42	1.00	2.44	2.81	2.50	2.67	2.46	2.41	4.00	2.53	2.71
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	11	2.16	3.77	1.83	2.67	1.89	1.00	2.40	2.29	1.86	2.53	1.85	1.97	4.00	2.28	1.86
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.11	3.31	1.87	2.19	2.11	1.00	1.88	2.18	1.43	2.38	2.12	2.01	3.00	2.24	1.50
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	1.97	2.23	1.88	2.24	1.80	2.50	1.64	2.29	1.43	1.71	2.62	1.93	2.43	1.76	2.93
Attend or leave college	14	1.93	2.54	1.82	2.29	1.91	3.50	1.48	1.41	1.93	2.03	1.81	1.90	2.29	1.84	2.21

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Why Move to the Neighborhood: Rural and Other Urban Areas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Property type (bedrooms, baths, amenities, etc.)	1	5.33	5.25	5.28	5.26	5.35	5.00	5.51	5.18	5.39	5.28	5.18	5.35	5.10	5.32	5.12
Neighborhood aesthetics, amenities, or reputation	2	4.70	4.58	4.65	4.90	4.53	3.40	4.44	5.27	4.54	4.63	4.75	4.69	4.75	4.64	4.73
Crime or perceived safety	3	4.44	4.73	4.31	4.67	4.31	3.60	4.68	4.10	4.60	4.25	4.53	4.42	4.65	4.45	4.39
Convenient access to services (banks, grocery stores, entertainment, etc.)	4	4.30	4.78	4.09	4.57	4.09	4.60	4.31	4.33	4.40	4.25	4.10	4.29	4.55	4.27	4.17
Affordability (lower taxes, lower home price, etc.)	5	4.25	4.42	4.18	4.18	4.25	5.00	4.40	3.88	4.43	4.04	4.41	4.26	4.15	4.19	4.41
Proximity to family and friends	6	3.92	4.25	3.80	3.77	4.09	4.80	3.79	3.73	4.00	3.83	3.91	3.92	4.00	3.98	3.34
Traffic congestion or commute distance	7	3.62	3.93	3.56	3.93	3.47	3.67	4.04	3.47	4.10	3.62	3.26	3.56	4.30	3.75	3.10
School quality	8	3.57	3.67	3.58	3.22	3.86	3.80	3.94	3.31	4.01	4.17	2.28	3.55	3.70	3.85	2.34
Job relocation, career change, or retirement	9	3.12	3.33	3.03	3.11	3.14	3.40	3.61	2.92	2.80	3.46	2.85	3.02	4.25	3.17	2.73
Transition from owner/renter to renter/owner	10	3.04	3.82	2.83	3.40	2.79	3.80	3.49	1.86	3.84	3.13	2.06	3.00	3.45	3.18	2.46
Cool factor or hipness	11	2.47	2.80	2.35	2.73	2.35	2.20	2.56	2.63	2.86	2.45	2.07	2.38	3.45	2.52	2.17
Change in relationship status or establishment of household	12	2.43	3.73	2.04	2.70	2.32	3.07	2.69	1.67	3.13	2.25	2.10	2.34	3.35	2.50	2.24
Health reasons or natural disaster	13	2.16	2.68	1.96	2.38	2.01	2.53	2.32	1.82	2.10	2.07	2.29	2.12	2.60	2.07	2.41
Attend or leave college	14	2.07	2.60	1.83	2.39	1.89	2.60	2.01	1.69	2.21	2.25	1.47	1.97	3.05	2.06	1.80

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Why Choose the House: Rural and Other Urban Areas

Factor	Rank	Overall	Singles	Partnered	No Kids	With Kids	Low Income	Middle Income	High Income	Millennials	Gen-X	Baby Boomer	Own	Rent	Employed	Under-employed
Price	1	5.59	5.80	5.46	5.64	5.57	6.33	5.74	5.18	5.80	5.54	5.37	5.61	5.55	5.60	5.37
Type of house (single family detached, townhouse, condo, multifamily, etc.)	2	5.52	5.58	5.45	5.43	5.62	5.07	5.49	5.43	5.37	5.44	5.72	5.54	5.35	5.50	5.56
Number of bedrooms	3	5.19	5.15	5.13	5.10	5.29	4.93	5.26	4.98	5.19	5.25	4.97	5.17	5.45	5.16	5.07
Number of bathrooms	4	5.02	4.90	4.98	5.05	5.07	4.13	5.21	4.82	4.94	4.99	5.01	5.02	5.15	4.98	5.00
Presence of yard	5	4.90	4.98	4.89	4.75	5.00	4.93	4.88	4.80	4.87	4.91	4.93	4.90	5.00	4.91	4.93
Square footage	6	4.87	4.73	4.90	4.83	4.94	4.67	5.13	4.67	4.89	4.96	4.71	4.89	4.70	4.84	4.95
Acreage and/or lot size	7	4.59	4.50	4.58	4.62	4.59	4.20	4.73	4.57	4.56	4.56	4.51	4.65	3.85	4.59	4.54
Year structure was built/renovated	8	4.32	4.47	4.32	4.28	4.43	3.80	4.51	4.37	4.63	4.29	4.26	4.35	3.90	4.36	4.49
Cost of utilities	9	3.98	4.38	3.80	4.09	3.98	4.27	4.23	3.18	4.20	3.86	3.82	3.95	4.30	3.91	4.10
Presence of a particular upgrade the client could not live without	10	3.83	3.88	3.84	3.71	3.96	3.80	3.92	3.86	4.01	3.60	4.03	3.85	3.55	3.86	3.85

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